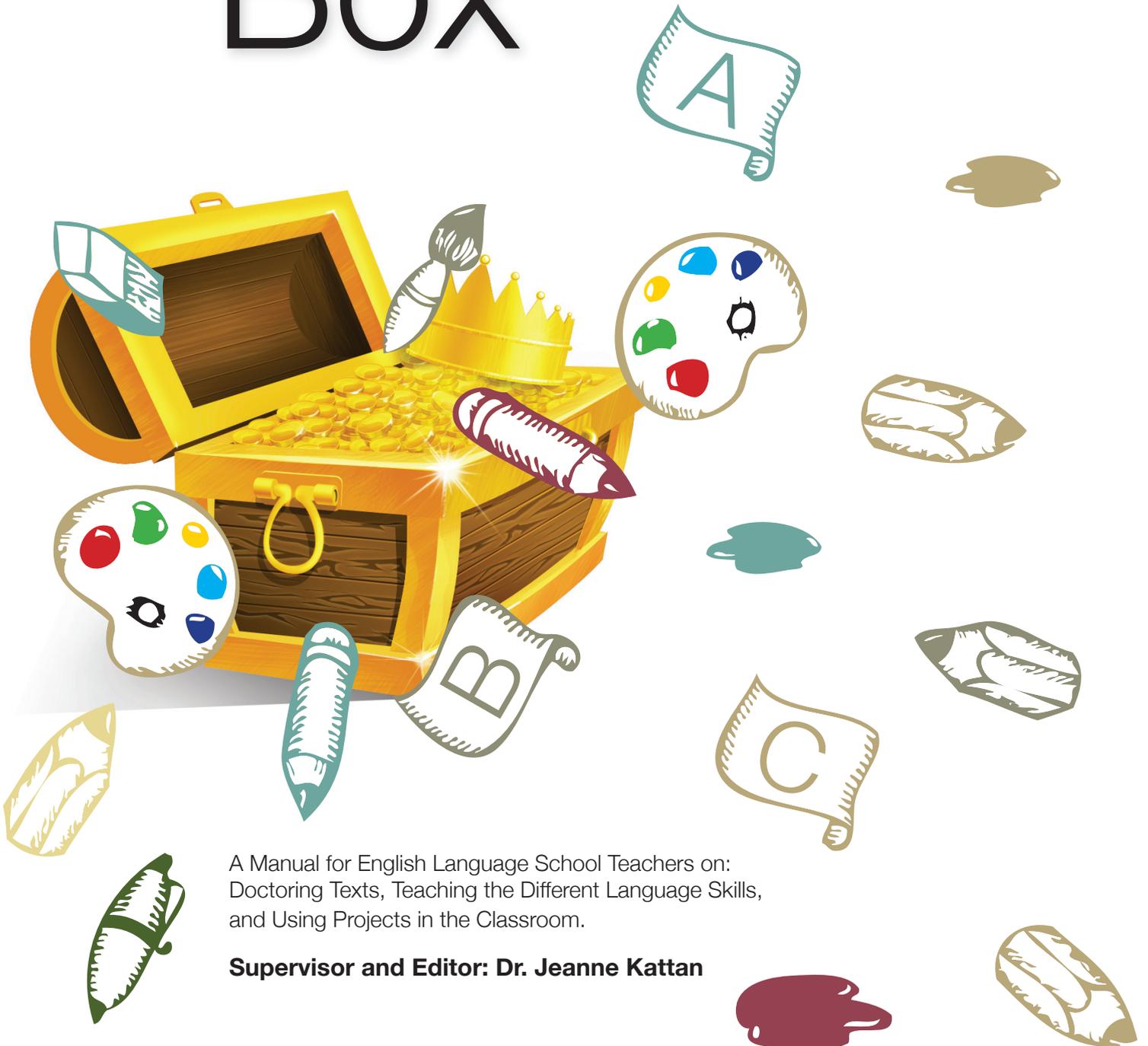


Our Treasure Box



A Manual for English Language School Teachers on:
Doctoring Texts, Teaching the Different Language Skills,
and Using Projects in the Classroom.

Supervisor and Editor: Dr. Jeanne Kattan

Our Treasure Box: A Manual for English Language School Teachers on: Doctoring Texts, Teaching the Different Language Skills, and Using Projects in the Classroom.

Supervisor and Editor: Dr. Jeanne Kattan

Contributors: Martha Bader, Mirvat Hammuri, Niveen Hajjar, Asma Rajabi

Production: Faisal Hussein Foundation



Funding: European Union



Copyright: 2014 by Faisal Hussein Foundation. Jerusalem, Palestine

Published by: Faisal Hussein Foundation

Phone: +970 2 2342686

Fax: +970 2 2345521

Email: info@fhfpal.org

Website: www.fhfpal.org

Design: Bailasan

Printing Supervision: Collage Productions

All rights reserved: no part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage system, without prior permission in writing from the Faisal Hussein Foundation.



TABLE OF CONTENTS:

I. THE INTRODUCTION	04
II. BACKGROUND ON THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL UPGRADING PROGRAM	05
III. WHAT “OUR TREASURE BOX” IS:	06
IV. MODIFYING OR “DOCTORING TEXTS”	07
A. Rationale	07
B. How Do I Modify a Text?	07
C. An Example of a Modified or Doctored Text	08
D. The Teachers’ Use of Modified or Doctored Texts	10
V. SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS	17
VI. THE PROJECTS	29
A. What is a Project?	29
B. The Teachers’ Implementation of the Projects	30
Project 1: The Island	30
Project 2: How Green Are You?	37
Project 3: Learning By Playing	39





I. THE INTRODUCTION:

Throughout his struggle for liberty and independence, Faisal Hussein believed that the basic values on which the Palestinian State should be built on are: freedom, equality and democracy.

Faisal Hussein had worked tirelessly, at every stage of the struggle, not only to emulate these values but also to defend them.

Today, as we examine Faisal Hussein's legacy and the values that he had held and championed, we ask ourselves: "How can we uphold them when we are suffering from internal schisms: geographic, political and tribal, and from the absence of justice and the collapse of values?" Perhaps the answer is by empowering the new generation to express their thoughts without fear.

Those who are acquainted with the work of the Foundation in the Capital's schools, can recognize how the Foundation is changing the focus of the learning process from the teacher to the student. This is done firstly through using a range of programs that focus on respecting the individuality of each student. Secondly, a variety of teaching and learning methods are introduced; the aim of which is to ensure a coherent learning experience that is inclusive and that suits the needs of every child. This intervention also focuses on the development of research and the production of literary genres. These skills, amongst the many skills that the Foundation is training the schools on, aim to help our students understand the values of freedom, equality and democracy. It is hoped that they would adopt these values and would be able to express and defend them.

We are pleased to present "Our Treasure Box" a document that reflects part of the fruitful efforts of Dr Jeanne Kattan who has supervised and has edited this document, as well as the efforts of the team of teachers: (Martha Bader, Mirvat Hammuri, Niveen Hajjar, and Asma Rajabi). They would like to share their experiences with you. They believe that they are special and are worth using. This contribution came as a result of Dr Kattan's work with the teachers on the development of the four language skills of their students, and on encouraging them to use alternative methods in their teaching of English.

I would like to add that this document is one of the outputs of the "The Comprehensive School Upgrading Program" that has targeted seven schools in the center of the Capital. The Program aims at ensuring that students enjoy their right to quality education in a child-friendly and motivating learning environment. The Program components have encompassed: the improvement of the infrastructure; the training programs for: teachers, administrators, and parents; and the extracurricular activities for the students. We are therefore very grateful to the European Union who have supported this Program from July 2011-July 2014.

Abdalqader Hussein
Chairperson
Faisal Hussein Foundation





II. BACKGROUND ON THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL UPGRADING PROGRAM:

The Faisal Hussein Foundation has developed the “Comprehensive School Upgrading Program” in order to offer a comprehensive support to the schools. The Program has served the different needs required for the development of the educational process. This has included: training programs, extra-curricular activities, as well as the development of the schools’ infrastructure. These services have been offered in order to ensure the students’ right to quality education in a child-friendly and in a motivating learning environment.

The Faisal Hussein Foundation has developed the philosophy behind the Comprehensive School Upgrading Program in 2003. It has since implemented the Program in 21 schools in Jerusalem. The implementation took place in different time periods. Each of the 21 schools has benefited from the Program for at least two years. Seven¹ of the 21 schools were recently served through the Program with the support of the EU. The Program was launched in June 2011. The seven beneficiary schools are: Al Nahda A School, Terra Sancta School, Al Fatah Secondary School, Al Fatah Al Shamila School, Al Fatah C School, Al Aytam C School, and Al Doha School.

A number of teachers from the seven schools have benefited from the training: Arabic, Mathematics, Science and English teachers from Grade 1- Grade 10. Parallel to the training of teachers, the Project has included training of the school administrators, the counselors, and the parents of the students. The training of teachers to cope with their students’ learning difficulties and to accommodate their students’ needs have been addressed. In addition, the Project has supplied the schools with computer labs and computers, as well as IT training of the teachers: each according to his/her needs. Moreover, the science labs were equipped and science field trips to students were arranged. The Project has also included the addition of extracurricular lessons and activities at the schools, such as: art, music and folklore dancing. Extracurricular activities such as reading contests in Arabic and in English, and science clubs were provided. The Al Nayzak For Supportive Education and Scientific Innovation has provided lessons during the school year on critical thinking, science and technology. Furthermore, the Project has helped in developing the infrastructure of the schools in terms of renovation and the provision of furniture.

The students in the schools that the Foundation is leaving will definitely function in a child-friendly environment. They will also be challenged to conduct science projects and to produce different literary genres.

1. The Foundation has submitted a proposal to the EU that has included seven schools, five of which the Foundation had already done work with in previous projects, and it wanted to complete the work that was started with them. It has also chosen two other schools (from a number of schools) who have asked the Foundation’s assistance. The Foundation did a needs assessment study of these schools before incorporating them.



III. WHAT “OUR TREASURE BOX” IS:

Dear teachers,



“**OUR TREASURE BOX**” is a work of dedication, persistence and commitment for teaching and learning. It is the work of dedicated and creative teachers who have always kept a “treasure box” from which they pulled out the necessary gems that inspired a teaching and learning quest. Super Mario, the character in the computer game, has said it well. “Some Treasure boxes hold the most mundane of articles while others hold unique items needed to complete a quest”. (Super Mario Wiki).

Our Treasure Box has both the “**mundane**”, or the ordinary items, as well as “**the unique**”, the “**gems**” or the very special items. The most important thing to consider is that both are serving a purpose; they are both needed to complete “**our quest**” as teachers. Our quest is to keep on searching for the best means to help our students “**learn**”. The students’ quest is to “**learn**” in the best and most rewarding way. We have used all the items in “**OUR TREASURE BOX**” with our classes. Both our evaluations and our students’ feedback have convinced us that they were worth adopting or at least trying out.

Thus, here is “**OUR TREASURE BOX**”. We are sharing our experiences accumulated over the past year with all teachers in the field. You will find in this treasure box the practices that were beneficial to our students. We hope you get the chance to try them out and reap the same benefits for your students and add to your treasure boxes.



IV. MODIFYING OR “DOCTORING TEXTS”:

A. Rationale:

As teachers we often need new texts. We need them especially when we design tests. This is because we should never use a text for testing reading and listening comprehension that has been used for teaching. The students already know the text, so what are we really testing “**memorization**”???

However, it is difficult to find texts for testing that parallel the texts that have been used in teaching. A practical way to overcome this problem is to “doctor” or to “modify” texts from the Unit that has just been taught.

Modifying a text is a skill that teachers can acquire when they embark on this process.

B. How Do I Modify a Text?

Following are some of Christine Nuttall’s ideas that are found in her book entitled: “**Teaching Reading Skills In A Foreign Language**”, Macmillan Books for Teachers, 2005 (pages 170-180). We need to consider these ideas when we modify texts.

Nuttall starts with discussing the concept of “readability”. She explains that readability refers to the combination of **structural and lexical difficulty**, **concept difficulty**, and **interest**.

Thus when we modify texts we should make sure that the grammar and the vocabulary in the text we produce is at the right level of our students. We should also avoid long and complex sentences as they add to the structural difficulty of the text. We are also urged to include only familiar vocabulary words as these can elicit the fullest possible responses from the students. Thus, we need to use the Unit that we have just taught to modify a reading and a listening text to use for our reading and listening tests. Using the grammatical structures and the vocabulary from that Unit guarantees one aspect of the readability of our tests.

Nuttall also adds that readability is not only a matter of language, it depends on other factors such as the familiarity of the topic, the cultural background, the conceptual complexity of the content and the interest it has for the reader. Thus our decision to modify a text that has just been taught caters for all these factors. The ideas in the text were discussed in class and the students are familiar with the topic as well as with the cultural background. Moreover, the exchange of ideas among the students has probably raised their interest in the topic.

Finally, Nuttall advises that we need to retain as much as possible of the textual quality and discourse



organization of the original. For example, if the text in the Unit was a letter, in the test it should be a letter. Moreover, the organization of the letter in the Unit should be closely followed in the letter that is modified for the test.

C. An Example of a Modified or Doctored Text:

The Original Text

Source: English for Palestine

Grade: 7A Unit 5, p. 36

Dear Amir and Rania,

I'm in Washington with some friends! I've found a computer games competition. I've already played -and won- loads of matches. I usually play on the Internet but at this competition we play in a team and meet the other players- that's interesting! I'm doing well so I'm really excited!

It's freezing here in the US now so it is excellent that I have something interesting to do. I have already made some visits to other cities and places in the US. Last week I went to a strange but fascinating city (I can't remember its name!).

I saw some old streets and I went to the Chinese part of the city. See my photos.

When the weather is warm again, I'm planning to go on a hike to see some famous trees. They're enormous! I'll send a photo I've found so you can see how big they are.

Be good both of you. You should help your mother in the home so she has time to have a rest.

Bye for now,

Uncle Bilal

The Doctored or Modified Text:

Dear Nadia and Mustafa,

I'm in New York with some singers from the "Arab Idol".

The singing competition will start next week. My friends and I are practising every day. We are really excited but we are also a little bit afraid. Everything here is big: the malls, the highways, the buildings."



They call New York the “Big Apple”.



My friends and I are planning to take a two-day holiday in order to visit the Universal Studios in Hollywood. The weather there is also much warmer than New York. It will be interesting to see how they produce films. The Palestinian community in California have planned a big dinner for us.



They are also paying our plane tickets and our hotels. I wish you were with me.

Be good both of you. You should study hard as your exams are next week.

Bye for now,

Your Loving Brother

Mohammad Assaf

Comments:

How does this modified text resemble the original?

1. The Format (Discourse Organization):

- a. Both are informal letters or possibly e-mails.
- b. In both, the greetings are informal and the same wordings are used (e.g. Bye for now).
- c. Arabic names are used in both.
- d. Both letters are addressed to a male and a female from the family by a member of the family.
- e. Both use informal language.
- f. Both have a competition (a computer game competition and a singing competition).
- g. Both are in the U.S.A.
- h. Both give the children an advice at the end: helping mother, studying for the exam.

Most importantly:

2. The Vocabulary in the original is very close to the vocabulary in the modified text.

Example:

competition, weather, excited

3. The Grammar Structures are more or less the same: I’m; the -ing form; have planned.

4. The Topic/Cultural Background/ Interest.

The Arab Idol Mohammad Assaf; New York; Hollywood.





The problems faced:

- That specific lesson was quite challenging for me and for the students as well. The students had to cope with three language skills: (**listening, writing, and speaking**).
- They **listened** twice: once to get the main idea, and once to answer the specific questions.
- They had to **speak** when they had to answer the questions orally.
- They had to **write** when they wrote the dictation.
- I faced a serious problem with the students who had learning difficulties; they were not able to concentrate; and they didn't manage to write anything or answer any question.

The comments of the students:

At the beginning of the lesson they grumbled at the procedure. They said, “We are not used to such a dictation lesson. “Some said: “It would be hard to do the dictation in this way!! We are going to get very bad marks”.

My comments about the experience:

It is so hard to express how frustrated I got at the beginning of the lesson, as the students didn't like the idea. But then when I carried on with my lesson some students got excited and participated. However, I'm so content with the results I got in the end, and I know I will be able to make my students get used to this kind of lesson which has a multi-purpose function, i.e., it covers three language skills.



Teacher: *Mirvat Hammuri*
Grade: *6*
Textbook: *English for Palestine, Unit 7*
Skill: *Listening (doctored text)*

First the students listened to the following doctored text:

Last November Manal went to Tulkarem in the north of Palestine. She saw a lot of olive trees. Some of them were a hundred years old. The people were picking their olives. School children were also helping. She went to help and had a great time.

Question 1: Listen and Complete:

This talk is about _____

Question 2: Listen Again:

Circle the word or words that are part of the talk.

Last November; south of Palestine; olive trees; farmers were picking; school children, had a good time.

Questions 3: Listen Again:

Are the following sentences True or False?

1. Manal went to Tulkarem last November. _____
2. She saw a lot of apple trees. _____
3. School children and teachers were picking olives. _____
4. She enjoyed her time. _____

Reflection:

In general, the atmosphere of the lesson was friendly and non-threatening. It was different from my other lessons because I felt that while the pupils were listening, I was an assistant to them more than I was a teacher. This was possible because there were several steps to do for each task. What was also interesting in this class was that the weak students have participated.

The majority of the pupils reported that they have enjoyed this new technique in listening. This technique gave them the opportunity to comprehend what they were listening to as they had to listen to it three times but that each time it had a different purpose.



Teacher: *Niveen Hajjar*
Grade: *6*
Textbook: *Family and Friends, Unit 5, p.48*
Skill: *Reading (doctored text)*

Preparation:

I prepared a worksheet which included a doctored text with some questions. (see page 14)

In Class

Introduction:

I revised the words that they took in the Unit, the words they were going to read in the text.

Presentation:

I told the students that they were going to work in pairs to read the paragraph and to answer the questions.

While they were working I went around to check their work and to make sure that they were all working. After 20 minutes I asked them to put their pens down.

We went through the answers and I wrote the correct answers on the board and the students corrected their own sheets. When they finished I collected their sheets.

Reflection:

I used pair work to encourage the students to discuss the information and to write their answers together.

While they were working, not all the students were working together. I urged them to do so but one of them said that he wanted to work alone because his partner didn't do any work; he only copied his answers. Another student said: "I like to work alone". I talked privately with both of these students and I convinced them to work with their partners.

When we were correcting the answers I heard some of them talking to each other when they had a wrong answer. They said to each other: "I told you but you didn't "listen". However, it was a good lesson and the students enjoyed it and they learned a lot from each other.





Reading Worksheet:

Name: _____

Date: _____



Read the text then answer the questions below:



In ancient times, people from different cultures used stones or sharp objects to draw pictures on walls of caves. These pictures were used because writing was not invented. The Egyptians invented writing only 7000 years ago. The English word “paper” comes from the word “papyrus”. This was the plant that the ancient Egyptians used to make paper from. They also invented pens to write on the paper. The pens were made from plants called **reeds**. These plants were hollow so they could fill **them** with ink. In 954 a Caliph from Egypt didn’t want a pen that dropped ink on his fingers and or on his clothes. So, a type pen was designed for **him**.

Question 1: Complete the following sentences:

1. The main idea of the paragraph is:
2. The pronoun “**him**” in line 7 refers to:
3. A liquid that is used for writing or drawing is:
4. The person who makes a new type of thing is:

Question 2: Write True or False:

1. The word “**reeds**” in line 5 means plants. _____
2. The pronoun “**them**” in line 5 refers to reeds. _____
3. “Papyrus” is a kind of paper. _____

Question 3: Answer these questions in complete sentences:

1. What did the ancient people use before the invention of writing?
2. Why were reeds used to make pens?
3. Why was the fountain pen invented?



Teacher: *Niveen Hajjar*
Grade: *4*
Textbook: *Family and Friends Unit 3, p.20*
Skill: *Reading (doctored text)*

Preparation:

I prepared a worksheet which included a doctored text with some questions.

Introduction:

In class, we revised the words that they took in the Unit by playing a miming game.

Presentation:

I told the students that they have a reading passage and they have to read it carefully and fill out the worksheet in 15-20 minutes.

I gave each student his worksheet and I made sure that he was reading. Before they started their reading and answering the questions I read the questions for them and explained them.

I collected their worksheets and gave each student the sheet of another student to correct.

Reflection:

I used individual work to check the students' ability to read and I wanted each student to depend on himself.

Almost all the students were doing what they were supposed to do but some of them (the weak students) didn't want to read at first because they thought that they won't understand and that it was difficult, but I encouraged them and started to read it with them to show them that it was an easy paragraph and they could understand it. So they worked on reading and answering the questions as much as they could. The text didn't include new words; all the words were from the Unit. So when I corrected the exercises the results they were good. When I gave them the chance to correct each other's sheets they liked the idea very much maybe because it was their first time to do such a task. They wanted to know who took their sheets. They were able to correct each other's answers well.

I think it was a good experience and the students enjoyed it.



Reading Worksheet:

Name: _____

Date: _____



Hi, I'm Sam. Last week we went on a school trip to the museum. We saw lots of dinosaur skeletons, and a model of T-Rex. The model roared and I thought it was alive! It was really scary and we all screamed. I bought a postcard for my mum in the museum shop, and my friend Joe bought a dinosaur model. We ate our lunch at the museum. I had a cheese sandwich and Joe had pizza.

Question 1: Read the text. Write True or False:

1. Sam went to the library. _____
2. The T-Rex was alive. _____
3. The children were scared of the roar. _____
4. Sam bought a dinosaur model. _____
5. Sam had a salad for lunch. _____

Question 2: Answer these questions in complete sentences:

1. Why did the children scream?

2. Who bought a post card?

3. What did Joe have for lunch?



V. SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE FOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS:

Teacher: Martha Bader

Grade: 8

Textbook: Top Score, Students' Book, Unit 2, p. 18

Skill: Silent Reading

Introduction:

- The teacher asked the students to have a look at the photos.
- The students started to give some information about the person in the photo (“Ronaldinho” the famous football player).

Presentation:

- The teacher asked the students to read the passage silently, they were not allowed to ask the meaning of the new vocabulary.
- The students were given time to read all the passage.
- The teacher asked the students to answer the following general questions about the passage:
 1. What is the text about?
 2. Which other kinds of sports do you know?
 3. According to the text, which is the easiest sport?

The teacher then did a model reading.

Evaluation step:

- The students were given a worksheet to complete. The worksheet included the reading comprehension questions.
- The worksheets were collected.
- The questions on the worksheet were answered (for the students' self-evaluation).

The interaction of the students:

The students were so involved at the beginning because the topic of the text was very familiar and interesting to them. They took the lead in directing the discussion; everybody participated. Even the weak students were able to share with an idea about sports.



The problems faced:

Actually this new method of taking a reading lesson which is not “**Reading Aloud**” but “**Silent Reading**” created a serious problem for the students, especially those who are weak in reading and have very little English vocabulary. I have to acknowledge that it’s partially my fault as I only used **Reading Aloud** in class.



Comments of the students:

Naturally, adopting a new way of learning is quite hard and challenging at the beginning. I heard some “grumblings” from students, such as: “Teacher, I can’t understand anything or I can’t even read”.

Reflection:

I was greatly frustrated when I heard the students complain about the new methodology. But this was expected. However, I had to point out the advantages in using this new method “Silent Reading”. I explained that each student is an individual who has his own speed in reading. Some students need more time to read a short paragraph and understand it. Previously the students were relying on me. They read aloud but they did not put any effort to try to understand the ideas in the text. Now my students are convinced that this is a better method: it allows them to find the meaning of the passage on their own. I am satisfied with what I’m doing with my students.



Teacher: *Martha Bader*

Grade: *9*

Textbook: *Top Score, Student's Book, Unit 3, page 22*

Subject: *Survival*

Skill: *Listening*

I. Pre-listening:

- The students were asked to look at a picture of a desert island. (Visual material).
- They were asked to close their eyes and imagine themselves on that island.
- They read the relevant information in the form of notes.

II. While listening:

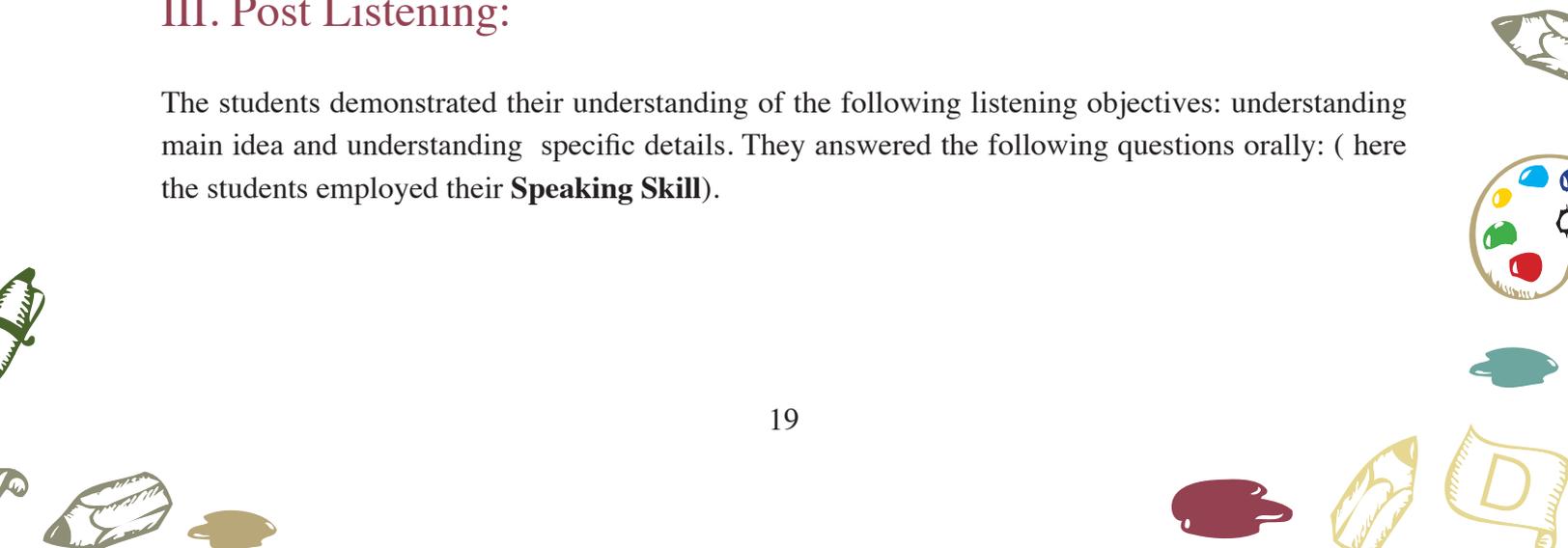
The purpose for this listening task was enjoyment: to find out the speakers' jobs, and to summarize each speaker's experience.

Procedure:

- The students listened to someone talking about an experiment organized by a TV company.
- They listened to four teenagers talking about their experiences on the desert island.
- (**Listen and Do**) They wrote the name of the TV program, the place where the experiment took place, the length of time the experiment took, what the teenagers were given before they went to the island, what they found when they arrived, and two things that they were given every day.
- The students listened to the description of the experiences again. They then matched the speakers with the summaries of the experiences that were in the book. (here the students employed their **Reading Skill**).
- They worked in pairs.

III. Post Listening:

The students demonstrated their understanding of the following listening objectives: understanding main idea and understanding specific details. They answered the following questions orally: (here the students employed their **Speaking Skill**).





Questions:

- If you were one of the teenagers in this program, which job would you have taken? Why?
- Which of the teenagers do you agree with? Why?

Each student had to defend his point of view orally.



Reflection:

Planning a lesson is vital for a teacher.

Planning is vital for teachers to ensure the success of the lesson and the coverage of the required skills and sub-skills.

I met a few difficulties while planning this specific lesson. The first difficulty was that I had to take each stage of the listening lesson into consideration: the **pre-listening stage**, the **while-listening stage**, and the **post-listening stage**. It took me quite a long time to do it. It was the first time I've done such a task. However, it was worth the effort and the time spent on it. While preparing this plan I really felt like a teacher in my first year of teaching.

Teacher: *Mirvat Hammuri*
Grade: *8*
Textbook: *English for Palestine, Grade 8, Unit 4*
Subject: *Food Fright*
Skill: *Reading*

The Reading Passage - How To Get Healthy:

- 1** Doctors in Britain are worried because British teenagers eat a lot of crisps, sweets and fatty food. Most teenagers don't eat enough fruit or vegetables and more than one million British school children are putting on weight.
- Some teenagers say that they don't have time to eat good food, but kids who have a poor diet
- 5** often have health problems when they are older.
- Americans have been familiar with fast food for a long time, **it** was born there. American junk food is now a part of life. McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Burger King have restaurants all over the world. These establishments are popular simply because **they** are fulfilling a need within a particular country's economy.
- 10** A diet of burgers, fries and soda may seem delicious, but it won't nourish your body with the vitamins and minerals you need to stay healthy. Junk food lacks many important nutrients. Some parents are criticizing the increase of fast food restaurants where people eat high-calorie foods of low nutritional value. Now doctors are giving young people books and games about diet. Having a healthy, well-balanced diet can help you feel better and live longer.

Procedure:

The students were divided into groups of four:

1. They were asked to locate the main idea of the whole text by going through it quickly.
2. They were then asked to read again to locate the main idea in each paragraph.

The answers to question 1 and 2 were discussed orally.

3. Then the students read the whole text again to demonstrate their understanding of specific details. They were asked to answer the following questions:

A. State whether the sentences are True or False. Use the material from the text to correct the false answers:

1. British doctors don't care about the eating habits of young people. ()
2. A great percentage of British school children are fat. ()

- 3. Fast food restaurants were born in France. ()
- 4. Fast food restaurants are popular around the world. ()
- 5. To keep our body healthy we need a steady diet of burgers. ()
- 6. Doctors are trying to inform teenagers about a good diet. ()

B. Match the words taken from text with their meaning:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------|-------------|
| 1. kids | _____ | restaurants |
| 2. shores | _____ | fast food |
| 3. deny | _____ | children |
| 4. fair | _____ | reasonable |
| 5. establishments | _____ | say no |
| 6. junk food | _____ | coasts |

C. Answer the following questions in complete sentences:

- 1. Why are British doctors worried?
- 2. Do young people normally eat vegetables and fruit?
- 3. What kind of problems can a poor diet bring about?
- 4. Why do so many people go to fast food restaurants?
- 5. Are parents happy with the emergence of fast food restaurants? Why?
- 6. What should we do to have a longer and a better life?

D. Complete the following:

- 1. The pronoun “**it**” in line 6 refers to:
- 2. The pronoun “**they**” in line 8 refers to:
- 3. The opposite of the word “**old**” in line 13 is:
- 4. Give an example of: 1. a country, 2. a nationality.



Teacher: *Asma Rajabi*

Grade: *10*

Textbook: *English for Palestine, Unit 13, Lessons 1+ 2*

Skill: *Speaking*

The students were divided into groups where they had to prepare presentations about the five citizens of the World.

Interaction of the students:

The students prepared for their presentations, they assigned the tasks of each member in the group. All the students participated.

Problems faced:

Some students were embarrassed to speak in front of the others, so they gave their job to the other students in the group.

Comments of the students:

Most of the students liked this experience because they assumed the responsibility of being “a teacher”. They liked group work because they shared the tasks which made the presentation easier.

Reflection:

I appreciated the way they prepared their presentations; they divided their tasks among the members of their group. Each group was competing to show that it was the best. The students and I felt very proud especially when they placed their photos on the English Club Page on Facebook.



Teacher: Asma Rajabi
Grade: 9
Textbook: English for Palestine, Unit 2
Subject: Where to go, What to see
Skill: Writing

Lesson procedure:

When we completed the writing exercise in the book entitled: “Writing about two famous places in Istanbul”, I asked the students to introduce two famous places in Jerusalem. Most of the students chose Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. I asked the students to bring the photos of the two places.

Interaction of the students:

I asked the students to describe the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque as they are shown in the pictures they brought. Most of the students participated and described the two places orally. Then, they described the routes to the places.

Finally, they used the information that they had heard from each other to write sentences which they then used to produce a paragraph.

Problems faced:

When the students read the title of their lesson; “writing”, they started complaining. Many of them said: “No, teacher writing is difficult; we don’t know how to write a paragraph”. I explained that we won’t be writing a paragraph, we’ll write sentences first to describe the places and then we’ll expand them into a paragraph. And if we were able to describe the places orally, it would be easy to write sentences.

Reaction of the students:

When the students wrote the sentences step by step; they gradually expanded them into a paragraph, they felt that it wasn’t so difficult to write when one has all the ideas.

Reflection:

The writing lesson was very good because the students were able to express their ideas orally, then they started writing sentences.



I believe that this way of teaching “writing” is helpful because it provides them with the necessary tools to produce a paragraph.

I taught the lesson in two Grades (total 28 students). All the students wrote the paragraph including the weak students. There were 18 **excellent** paragraphs and 10 between **very good** and **good**.



Teacher: Niveen Hajjar

Grade: 5

Textbook: Family and Friends: Unit 2: Play Script

Skill: Listening

The students listened to the first part of the play script. The purpose was to familiarize them with the ideas and the words they were going to hear. Then I asked them to predict what will happen next. I wrote their predictions on the board then I played the tape.

In the second phase, I gave each student a worksheet. They listened to the play script three times. For the first time, they had to answer question A; for the second time, they had to answer question B; and for the third time, they had to answer question C (**see attached worksheet**). Thus for each time they had to do a different task.

We went through the answers together and the students corrected their worksheets . Then I collected their sheets to check the areas they had difficulty in..

Reflection:

I used pair work to let the students discuss the information and to write the answers together.

The text they had listened to was the second part of a play (Sherlock Holmes).They had read the first part in the Unit so they were familiar with the characters and the events. The students enjoyed the predicting exercise and they gave me lots of logical predictions, many of which were correct.

When I played the recorder for the first time they forgot that I had asked them to work in pairs and they started to work as if it were a competition. So I took the sheets from the students and kept only one sheet for each 2 to make them work in pairs.

When I replayed the cassette they listened carefully because they were concentrating and the class was very quiet. Moreover, the recording was clear and the volume was appropriate. They were also encouraged to do their best. When they finished the exercises, we corrected them together. They did very well. They were happy to have the correct answers some students said: “We don’t have any mistakes”. One of the students said: “We were the first to finish and all our answers were correct”.

I personally think that it was an excellent lesson; my students enjoyed it and even the weak students were able to participate.

The Listening Worksheet:

Name: _____

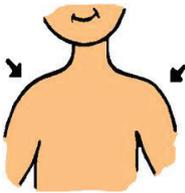
Date: _____

Question A: Find the words from the text that match the pictures.

Bird
Newspaper
Hat
Magnifying glass

Diamond
Doorman
Goose

Brain
Walking stick
Shoulder



Question B: Listen again and number the events in the correct order:

- Holmes shows Moran a book. _____
- Holmes takes the diamonds. _____
- The police arrive. _____
- Moran enters. _____
- Holmes goes into the bedroom. _____
- Billy brings Merton in. _____

Question C: Listen again and write True or False:

- 1. Holmes was happy to see Moran. _____
- 2. Holmes knew who stole the diamonds. _____
- 3. The police were coming. _____
- 4. Moran had to wait in the bedroom. _____
- 5. The diamond was in Moran's hand. _____

The Listening Play script:

Holmes: Ah, Mr. Moran. I'm glad you're here. I wanted to talk to you. I want to find the diamond.

Moran: I don't know where it is.

Holmes: Yes, you do, and you are going to tell me.

Moran: I won't tell you anything.

Holmes: Perhaps Mr. Merton will tell me. Billy, please bring Mr. Merton in.

Billy: Yes, sir.

Merton: What's going on?

Holmes: I know you stole the crown diamond and I know how you stole it. I've written it all in this book. The only problem is, I can't write about where the diamond is now, because I haven't found it yet.

Moran: You will never know.

Holmes: Oh, I think I will. You see, my friend Watson has just gone to the police station. The police are coming now. You can wait here. I will wait in my bedroom.

Moran: What are we going to do?

Merton: I don't know.

Moran: The diamond is here, in my pocket. Take it and leave the country.

Holmes: Thank you. I'll take that.

Holmes: "Ah": that will be the police. Just in time.



VI. THE PROJECTS:

A. What is a Project?

Definition:

Project work is student-centered and driven by the need to create an end-product. However, it is the route to achieving this end-product that makes project work so worthwhile. The route brings opportunities for students to develop their confidence and independence and to work together in a real-world environment by collaborating on a task which they have defined for themselves and which has not been externally imposed.

Each project has three main stages:

1. The Planning Stage:

In conjunction with the teacher, students discuss the scope and content of their project.

2. The Implementation Stage:

At this stage students carry out the tasks in order to achieve their objective. It may involve working outside the classroom or not, depending on the nature of the project.

3. The Creation of the End-Product:

The end-product is something tangible and end-products can take many different forms.

Benefits:

1. It is an integrated Unit of Work:

A project is a recognizable unit of work with a beginning, middle, and end. Through a series of worthwhile activities, which are linked to form a tangible end-product, the students can gain a real sense of achievement.

2. It integrates language knowledge and skills:

Language introduced and practised within a project is directly related to the task at hand: the students use the language that is needed for the successful completion of the activity. A project introduces and practises language, and integrates language skills in a natural way.

3. It caters for mixed-ability classes:

Projects can cater for classes in which there are students with a range of abilities, needs, and interests. Within class project work, there are often opportunities for different students to make different contributions, depending on their capabilities.



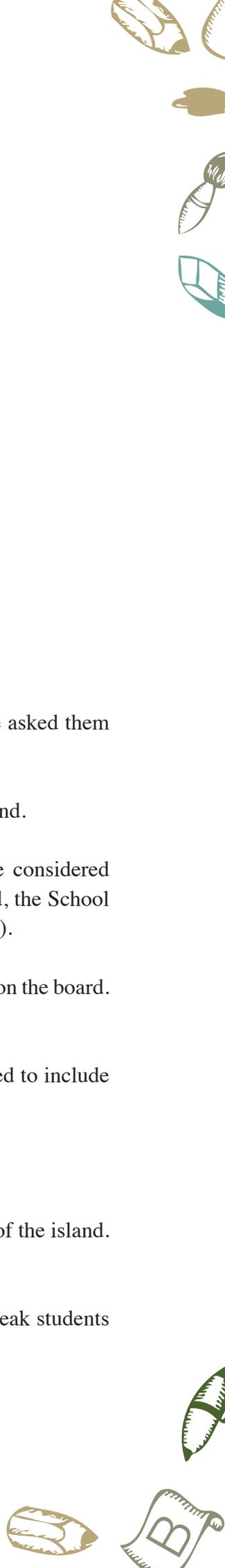
Sources:

1. Projects With Young Learners:

Philips D., Burwood, S., and Dunford, H.
Oxford University Press
1999

2. Project Work:

Diana L. Fried-Booth
Oxford University Press
2001



B. The Teachers' Implementation of the Projects:

Project 1: The Island

Teacher: Martha Bader

Grade: 9

Lesson 1: Deciding on the main parts of the Island:

- Step 1:** The teacher introduced the idea of the “Fantasy Island” to the students. She asked them about their opinions.
- Step 2:** The teacher asked the students to discuss the main parts of their Fantasy Island.
- Step 3:** Each student wrote, on a piece of paper, the section of the island that he considered important. These were: the City Council, the School, the Rules of the Island, the School Uniform, etc... (the students were also encouraged to give other suggestions).
- Step 4:** The teacher collected the pieces of paper and wrote the students' suggestions on the board. All the suggestions were considered.
- Step 5:** After a long discussion the students voted for the main parts that they wanted to include in their Island.

Lesson 2: Dividing the class into groups:

- Step 1:** I asked the students to get into Groups that correspond to the different parts of the island. These were: The Council, the School, the Farm and the Zoo.
- Step 2:** The students chose their own partners in the Group. I made sure that the weak students were not left in the same Group.
- Step 3:** Each Group chose a representative to speak on their behalf.



Step 4: The groups discussed the details of the part of the island they had chosen. They had to make sure that these details were relevant.

Step 5: The students decided on the materials needed to start working on in the next lesson (cardboard, pens, scissors etc....).

Step 6: I wrote each Group plan on the board for all the class to see.

The interaction of the students:

All the students started thinking about which part of the Island to choose and which Group to join. Naturally they chose their best friends. It was OK for me; friends usually understand each other without having to spend time explaining their ideas. Besides this would make the task more enjoyable and entertaining, but I had to distribute the weak students among all the Groups.

Reaction of the students:

The students adored the idea of choosing their friends. They were excited about spending some wonderful time with their best friends inside the classroom!!! They got really excited that they started discussing what they had to prepare for the next lesson right away.

Problems:

For that specific lesson I knew that I would face a problem getting them into suitable groups, for we made noise while moving the students' desks. Moreover, some students refused to let their weak classmates join their Groups. But I managed to convince them to "accept the others", no matter what potentials they had or didn't have.

Comments from the students:

All the students were really enjoying the idea of working together to produce something. Some said: "We wish we could work in this way in all the other subject classes."

My comments:

I can't express how I'm feeling now: "Finally I have managed to reach out to my students and make them work voluntarily". I hope I can make it till the end.



Lesson 3: Setting the Island School:

- Step 1:** The Group responsible for the School designed the school building on a card board.
- Step 2:** This Group has also discussed the characteristics of the teachers on their island. In this way they integrated their language knowledge as well as their fantasized teachers.
- Step 3:** The School Group then decided on the subjects they liked to be taught in their school. They included the subjects they liked and excluded the subjects they didn't like.
- Step 4:** The Group designed the school uniform. They designed the school badge as well. In this part they expressed their attitudes towards their actual school uniform and their school badge.
- Step 5:** They also set the school rules. They took into consideration some restrictions and the "forbidden matters" in their actual school.
- Step 6:** The representatives of this Group presented the school uniform, the teachers, and the rules to the other Groups. While the teacher was writing on the board, the other Groups voted on all these issues.

Evaluation:

The interaction of the students:

The students of the School Group started their task by giving humorous comments. They mentioned all the teachers, and all the rules they disliked. Eventually, they took the matter seriously and started working.

Reactions of the students:

The students got excited especially when the representatives of the School Group presented their suggestions concerning the school subjects (English, Economics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, German, Technology, and PE). They excluded most of the subjects they are actually taking at school. Concerning the teachers, and to my surprise, they chose the teachers who are strict, responsible, understanding the teenagers' feelings, sympathetic, and humorous.

Problems:

As I mentioned previously, the problem I faced in that specific lesson was that they didn't take things seriously, and they made fun of some teachers; I had to interfere and stop them immediately. After that they got organized again and started working.



Comments from the students:

The students were so pleased with the idea of planning their own school that some of them said: “We are living our daydreams!!!”



Another student commented, “This learning process is more beneficial, easier and more fun than our usual lessons!!!”

Lesson 4: Setting the Council Rules and the Election of the President:

Step 1: I asked the Council Group to suggest rules that will help them live together peacefully.

Step 2: The Group members wrote their rules; each member wrote what he considered convenient.

Step 3: I wrote the suggested rules on the board. At least ten rules were required. Punishments for breaking the rules were suggested as well.

Step 4: All the students voted for what they considered to be the most convenient ones.

Step 5: The elections for choosing the President of the Island were held. Each student chose two persons. The most repeated student names were considered candidates for the presidency. Next, the voting took place. The student who received the largest number of votes was the winner.

Step 6: The Council Group then designed the flag for their island after discussing it with the other Groups. They had to explain the colours and the symbols they chose for the flag. Then the Drawing Group drew it on the main Island Map.

The interaction of the students:

In this particular lesson the students were quite involved as if they were really planning their own state. This was especially apparent when they set the rules for the City Council. One felt that they were responsible and committed to their ‘state’ just as any loyal citizen. Besides they were organized during the election process; nobody got upset or annoyed by the results. They were very excited when they were designing their island flag.

The reactions of the students:



This lesson was so impressive; the students chose some interesting rules for their island (rules that I did not expect teenagers to set!!). For example: “All students are equal no matter what religion or potentials they have.” They suggested some entertaining social activities such as holding fairs and sports tournaments.



The most entertaining and really funny moments were when they designed their island flag. They drew a watermelon on their flag, they did so as they explained later because their island was famous for growing watermelons!!

Problems:

There were no problems at all. On the contrary, I felt the harmony amongst them. I started believing that this class has been so taken up by this project that you got the impression that they really belonged to that island.

Comments from the students:

I heard some quite interesting comments from the students; “I wish I can live on our island!!”. “It seems a wonderful place to live in peacefully!!” “It feels so good to live in your homeland and elect your president!!”.

My comments:

This lesson was very touching; I felt like crying when I heard the students saying that they liked the idea of having their own land and holding elections just like all the other countries. These young men have never had the opportunity to participate in electing their representatives.

Lesson 5: Organizing the Farm and the Zoo on the island:

- Step 1:** I asked the students to discuss the kinds of crops; vegetables and fruit they would like to grow on their island.
- Step 2:** The Farm Group students consulted each other about the crops to be grown on their island.
- Step 3:** They then took the opinion of the rest of the Groups by means of a vote.
- Step 4:** The Farm Group students also decided on the farm animals they would like to include on their farm. They took into consideration the other students’ opinions by means of a vote.
- Step 5:** The Zoo Group students decided which animals to include in their zoo, they took into consideration the other students’ opinions by means of a vote.
- Step 6:** They looked up some information about the animals to be installed in the zoo, such as habitats, feeding, etc ...
- Step 7:** The Group then asked the Drawing Group to assist them in designing their parts of the island.



The Interaction of the Students:

In these two parts of the Fantasy Island, the students were actually enthusiastic, as if they were designing their own houses. They asked the other Groups about their views of what crops to plant and which animals to include in the farm as well as in the zoo. What really was so funny was that they all decided to grow “watermelons” as a main kind of crop. This made them name their island “**Watermelon Island**”, and to design the flag with the watermelon on it.

Reaction of the students:

While they were designing their island, I noticed that the students got gradually more and more involved in it. They came up with new ideas and they competed with each other as to which Group would have the most attractive part. Taking each others’ opinions was so impressive to me. They were also helpful with the others.

Problems:

The main problem I faced in this whole project is that my students produced some noise that has disturbed the other classes. Naturally students working on such an exciting activity would definitely make noise.

Comments from the students:

The Farm students expressed their feelings towards their task by saying: “We wish we had such a farm to grow the kinds of vegetables and fruit we want in it!!”.

The Zoo Group students said, “We like the way we designed our zoo, and we would like to invite everybody to visit it”.

My Comments:

I have no words to express how I feel about it, for in each lesson and as the students were proceeding with their tasks, I could see they were more and more proud of the things they were producing.

Evaluation of the whole project:

At our last session for the project, each Group representative presented the work of his Group to the whole class. To my surprise, the students, first of all, presented their work in fluent and correct English. They were so happy and so proud to show to the other students what they have accomplished. Accordingly, I felt so proud of them, especially those whom I thought were hopeless. I am very satisfied with what I have achieved with these students.



I consider my project very successful for these reasons. Firstly and most importantly, it strengthened the relationship between me and my students: we built trust and harmony. I feel that they have changed their attitude towards me and the English language; they started liking the language. Eventually they started liking me!!

The Students' Comments:

In that last session, I asked my students to give me their evaluation of the project. Here are some of their comments:

“We enjoyed the project so much that we’d like to do it again!!!”

“We benefited a lot from this project, we experienced team work and co-operation in order to accomplish this task!!!”

“We discovered our potentials; some of us showed skills in drawing, others in designing and in creativity, most importantly in using the English language!!!”

“This project was worthwhile the effort; we found out that English is an interesting language to use, and easy, too!!!”

“With this project we built harmony, understanding, trust, and acceptance of the other, as one Group, as well as one class!!!”



Project 2: How Green Are You?

Teacher: Asma Rajabi

Grade: 10

Procedures:

The project was produced in three stages. Group work was the aim of the project.

Stage 1: Recycling:

Lesson 1: The Groups had a brainstorming session. They introduced many recycling ideas. They also listed the importance of recycling and how it helps the environment. Then they started recycling. They used old plastic bottles to make plant containers.

Stage 2: Planting:

The Groups started preparing the bottles to make them ready for planting. One Group watered their plants twice a week.





Stage 3: Preparing the Album:

Each Group wrote about their experience in preparing for the project in recycling and in planting. After editing the material they prepared, they started designing their album.



Interaction of the Students:

All the students participated including the weak students. They found the lessons different because they could go out of their classroom. Planting was a good idea to make the students participate freely.



Problems Faced:

During the writing lessons, there were some students who couldn't share their ideas in English, so they expressed themselves in Arabic and the other students in their Group wrote their ideas in English.

Comments of the Students:

The students were very happy and proud of their work, because all the school students were asking them about their project. They were watching their plants everyday. They also developed a positive attitude towards the environment.

Comments of the Teacher:

The most amazing thing in this project was developing the students' responsibility. This project proved that there is no barrier between English and fun. This has helped all the students to participate.

The students were sharing their experiences without reservations. The one who is good in English organized the sentences, the other who has beautiful handwriting wrote the sentences. Another student who is creative drew and colored. So the Groups worked harmoniously and they complemented each other.



Project 3: Learning By Playing

Teacher: *Mirvat Hammuri*

Grade: 8

Students' Contribution:

The two 8th Grade sections chose a game of their own.

Each Group decided on a topic and wrote 12 questions about the topic.

A. Section "A":

1. Group "A" wrote questions using the present simple and the present continuous tenses.
2. Group "B" wrote twelve general questions from their curriculum.
3. Group "C" chose a passage and wrote questions about it.

B. Section "B":

1. Group "A" wrote questions about Jerusalem
2. Group "B" wrote questions about the vocabulary in Unit 4.
3. Group "C" wrote 12 general questions.

Each Group designed a visual to record their scores on. This was a more amusing and eye-catching technique. Each Group took the role of a competitor and a leader.

The Visual aids produced by section "A":

1. **A Clock:** each number on the clock had a question.
2. **A Power Point** with questions.
3. **A Board** with pockets and each pocket had a question.

The Visual Aids produced by section "B":

1. **A Poster** of an apple tree.
2. **A Soft Drink Bottle** in the shape of a basket with questions inside it.
3. **Colored Paper Decorations.**

Each Group in section "A" presented their questions to the other two Groups using their visuals. Members within the leader Group took turns to ask the questions and give the instructions they have



decided on. Members within the other two Groups took turns to answer. Whoever answered correctly moved on the Snakes and Ladders board. (Each question had the number of the movements).



The same was done in Section “B”, one Group asked their questions. The other Groups took turns and fixed a piece of cloth on the doll’s body. The body was drawn on the board.

Planning and Procedures:



Doing this Project took 4 sessions. In the first session, the 8th graders were given an idea about the project and about what they should produce.

A discussion was held to decide which game will be used in this project. Section “A” chose “Snakes and the Ladders”, while section B chose a “Dressing Game”.

I designed the Snakes and the Ladders board and the students designed the Doll’s Body.

Students in each class were divided into three Groups of 6-7 students of different abilities. Their task was to choose a topic and write questions about it.

I sat with each Group for about 5 minutes to assist in their discussion.

The 2nd session: In this session the students did these tasks:

- In groups they discussed their questions and chose the best twelve.
- They also wrote their own instructions, rules, and allotted time for each question.
- They copied the questions on small cards.

The 3rd session: in this session, the Groups worked to design their visuals. Each girl within the group had a task to do.

The 4th session: (Competition time) they used their questions and visuals to play the game. In this session they were asked to write their comments and their reflections on the project.





The Teacher's Reflections:

From my perspective, using projects in teaching a second language is highly motivating because they are amusing and interesting. They can be used to practise all the language skills and they can be used to practise both oral and written communication.

I was very satisfied with the results of this project. First, all the four skills were integrated. Second, my students became responsible for their own language. They learned from each other, corrected, assisted and assessed each other. I was an organizer, editor, and assistant but I was also a learner. I was surprised with their beautiful ideas and good management. In addition, in those sessions the communicative and cooperative spirit was highly noticeable. Students were partners in giving an answer or in reaching a conclusion and each student was responsible for a part of the task.

Although it was a hard task, my students did their best to produce good language and creative ideas. They were personally involved in the project and they asked me to use the game after each unit. They said, "We will be happy to prepare questions and tasks about different areas after each Unit."

The Students' Reaction:

The students were enthusiastic, active, busy and happy.

When my students were asked to reflect on this task, most of them reported that they had fun and had enjoyed this experience.

They added that preparing questions to play the game motivated them to read, to search and to use their own language. One of my students said that she knew that the aim of this task was to learn by playing so she had to think deeply to produce meaningful and entertaining ideas. Others reported that they were proud of themselves because they found that they can form questions with a few mistakes.

Some students commented that: "designing an aid is an amazing task, we were very enthusiastic: working together gave us the chance to discover our classmates' abilities." One of the weak students said: "I wasn't bored, and I was happy to participate because I did what my Group has asked me to do."



