

Skill Building in the Reading and Listening Class

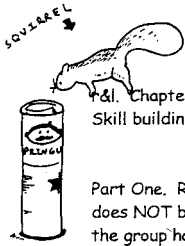
Ian Willey

The textbooks for the Reading and Listening course (*Information, Please and More Information, Please*) introduce students to a number of reading skills; for example: inference, skimming, scanning, identifying topic sentences, and cause and effect. Developing these skills is important, as students need to be able to understand not only the meaning of English words, but what these words suggest; they need to be able to think critically about what they have read. In this presentation, I shared some activities which were developed to help students to sharpen their reading skills.

To provide students with materials, I adapted and created activities and prepared several handouts, each one focusing on a particular reading skill. Several of these handouts were compiled in a packet and handed out. I went over a few handouts with the audience, and described how they tested certain skills. For example, the handout below addressed the skill of making inferences.

To make a more collaborative atmosphere, students worked on the below activity in pairs. For Part One, more than one answer is possible, depending on the rule that students create. It was stressed to students that as long as they were able to defend their rule, they had answered each problem well. I felt such an activity was successful in helping students to think critically, while making for a more positive, interactive atmosphere. Handouts such as this also helped me to personalize the class, which can be difficult for instructors to do in the Reading component of R&L.

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&l. Chapter 5: Stress!
Skill building: Inferencing

Willey 2001

Part One. Read the following groups of words. For each group, find the one thing that does NOT belong in the group. Then, write a rule for the group (what do the words in the group have in common?)

1. chocolate roses jewelry sashimi greeting card

Rule:

2. bear squirrel platypus human chimpanzee

Rule:

3. Yoko Ono Masako sama Hikaru Utada Mori san Haruki Murakami

Rule:

4. Tennis Skiing Surfing Jogging Golf

Rule:

5. Earthquake Volcano Typhoon Godzilla Traffic accident

Rule:

6. Sea water Pringles Soy sauce Peanuts Apples

Rule:

7. The Matrix Johnny Mnemonic The Terminator Speed

Rule:

8. Thomas Edison Isaac Newton Albert Einstein Ian Willey

Rule:

9. information authentic speed writing please

Rule:

10. waitress book translator teacher priest lawyer

Rule:

