

IMPORTANCE OF RIDDLES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Annotation

In language learning process there are a great deal of factors so as to improve the language skills such as reading activities, writing activities, speaking activities, listening activities, crosswords, interactive games, conversations and others. As well as riddles has a vitally important role in this process.

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Riddles are a very useful educational tool for children. Not only are they fun, but they can also help develop important learning and problem-solving skills.

There are so many benefits of using riddles while learning any type of languages, such as:

Development of critical thinking skills. Riddles help children develop their critical thinking skills by requiring them to analyze information, think logically, and find creative solutions to problems.

Improved problem-solving skills. When faced with a puzzle, children must identify the problem, consider different approaches and strategies to solve it, and find a solution.

Development of creativity. Riddles foster creativity and imagination, very useful skills in areas such as science or math, but also in communication.

Improved memory and concentration. Solving riddles requires attention to detail and retention of information.

Encouraging teamwork and collaboration. Many riddles can be solved in teams, which fosters collaboration among students and improves social relationships within the classroom.

Increased self-esteem and confidence. When children solve a riddle, they feel proud of their accomplishments and skills.

Improved communication. Through riddles, children are able to learn new words that will enrich their vocabulary.

In short, riddles can help develop important learning and problem-solving skills as well as improve creativity, memory and concentration. They are also a fun and exciting way to learn, which helps to motivate students and keep them interested in learning.

Practical Uses for Riddles in Your ESL Classroom

Group Discussion

Why did the chicken cross the road? Depending on where your students call home, they may have all sorts of ideas. Though riddles are intended to be humorous and depend on word play, that doesn't mean you and your students can't take a little literal break when it comes to these silly questions. When you introduce a riddle to your class, let groups of students talk for a few minutes about what the answer might be. Encourage your students to think both about the humorous answer as well as a more serious one. Then, have groups of students share their ideas with each other. Though the ultimate intention of riddles is humor, these questions can function as good conversation starters and get your students sharing ideas and using language in the classroom with each other.

Teaching Homophones

In one typical riddle structure, the solutions to riddles depend on an alternate meaning of a key word in the question. For example, "*What has four wheels and flies?*" One's natural instinct is to imagine a type of vehicle that fits the description. Planes? Helicopters? Something else? When you do, though, you won't come up with the "right" answer to the question. That's because this riddle is based on two different meanings of the word fly. Because of how it's worded, the question makes the listener picture the motion of flying, but the answer depends on another meaning of the word. Rather than the action of flying, this riddle is asking about the insect called *a fly*. The

correct answer to this riddle depends on using the noun form of fly. When they do, your students may come up with the correct answer to the riddle on their own: a *garbage truck*. A similar riddle is this: *What is black and white and red all over?* Or should we say read all over? The answer is *a newspaper*, and your ESL student must know the two distinct words (*red* and *read*) that sound alike in English. Once your students understand how homophones are used in riddles, you can challenge them to write their own riddles that depend on two different meanings of one word.

Teaching Idiomatic Expressions

Another common theme among riddle answers is literal versus idiomatic meanings. When the riddle is “*Why did the man throw the clock out the window?*” we are imagining a literal interpretation of events. We see the man taking his alarm clock and throwing it out the window, which we all might want to do on Monday mornings. The key here, though, is the idiomatic expression that answers the riddle. *He wanted to see time fly*. The man in the riddle is acting out a literal depiction of an idiomatic expression. ESL students spend much time learning English’s idioms. A fun way to review them is to use this type of riddle in your classroom. Once your students know a good pool of idioms, challenge them to write their own riddles using one of those expressions with a literal expression!

Punctuation in Dialogue

Punctuating dialogue can be confusing. I have spent many class periods instructing students in the proper use of quotation marks, commas, and speech tags. The next time you do the same, you can use riddles to make the practice more interesting with the classic riddle genre – knock-knock jokes. Because every knock-knock is a conversation between two people, writing them out is a simple way to give your students practicing writing dialogue, and you’ll get the opportunity to talk about homophones, idioms and cultural humor as well.

Don’t Forget About Fun

Why do young and old ultimately like riddles? Because they are fun. Riddles do have practical applications in the ESL classroom, but the benefits of riddles aren’t all

academic. Sometimes the best thing you can do in your classroom is encourage a little laughter. Working with riddles gives your students a chance to be creative and witty as they study and learn the English language and hopefully gets everyone in the room chuckling, too!

To conclude, it is always advised to learn and utilize various types of riddles in the language learning process. By learning different riddles, students or pupils can improve their critical thinking, communication skill, intelligence and other skills

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