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THE ROLE OF TEACHING LITERATURE IN THE HIGHER SYSTEM

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: Today the theory and practice of language and culture attracts more and more scholars, it has become evident that the investigation of its problems requires expertise from the different points of view of various areas of linguistics.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching literature skills can help an instructor provide critical knowledge about a fictional text and some helpful methods for analyzing it. When students understand how to approach a literary text, they can develop important capabilities that can help them succeed in a future career. By learning about different strategies for teaching this skill in a classroom, you can determine which option may work best for you and your students. In this article, we define what literature skills are, discuss why they're important and explain how to teach these skills with 10 different strategies. Literature skills are proficiencies linked to reading fictional compositions, including critical thinking, vocabulary and writing. They involve analyzing a text to understand its core themes and the motivations of its characters, which can teach a student how to construct a narrative themselves and ask meaningful questions about a text's relevance. Studying literature skills can also involve studying how to communicate effectively, as a teacher may instruct a class to discuss a text during a lesson.

Considering the following reasons why it's important to teach literature skills in a classroom:

- **Develops critical thinking skills:** By analyzing a fictional text, students can learn how to develop a perspective on its messages and determine how it can relate to outside concepts. Some

nonfiction authors use narrative techniques, so literature skills can help students apply critical thinking skills in different contexts.

- Offers cultural knowledge: Students can read fictional texts about people from different societies or cultures, which can help them understand how diverse groups of people express themselves and conduct their lives. It can help them develop empathy for people in different situations.
- Provides vocabulary in context: It may be helpful for students to observe how people use new vocabulary words in a sentence. This can also help students recall these words more efficiently and correctly in the future.
- Enhances writing capabilities: Reading a fictional text closely can help students learn how language works, particularly sentence structure and rhythm, which may help students develop their writing abilities. As a result, students might correspond more effectively in the future or decide to become professional writers.

1. Start with short stories

- Use short stories to develop a student's knowledge of narrative principles and structure. Short stories often have the same depth and scope as a longer novel, but a smaller word count may allow students the ability to focus more on its details. Sharing several short stories can help you show multiple authors, genres and styles to your class and enhance their base of literature knowledge. Consider having students reread a text multiple times to inspire new questions about its meaning and generate new topics of analysis.

2. Focus on a story's elements

The five main narrative elements are plot, character, setting, theme and conflict. As they appear in most genres of literature in some capacity, you can offer students an opportunity to develop a robust understanding of their definitions and applications. Consider providing a writing or reflection assignment alongside nightly reading homework, then engage the class in a discussion.

For example, you can construct a diagram or map that students complete with information about a story's elements. It may be helpful for them to write notes for future reference or to prepare sentences they can use in an essay. After they complete the assignment, you can instruct students to share their observations with the class and spend some time adjusting their definitions if necessary.

3. Involve reading methods

- Reading methods are specific frameworks and actions a person uses to find meaning in a text. For instance, using a compare-and-contrast method involves noticing similarities and differences between certain ideas or characters. Focusing on cause-and-effect in a story can help a student understand how one plot component connects to another, or track a character's emotional arc throughout a text. By introducing these methods to students, you can give them critical resources for analyzing texts and writing about their perspectives in a future essay assignment.

4. Use engaging texts

- Find texts that compel your students to discuss them with each other and analyze their story elements. To find texts, you can ask your students to share a favorite book and align their choices with suggestions from a textbook. There are also multiple online community resources where teachers share their students' favorite in-class fictional books. Depending on the requirements of your curriculum, you can also incorporate a student's favorite outside text into a daily lesson or assign homework that allows students to make their own selections.

5. Show age-relevant media

- Depending on an administration's guidelines, you can show students television shows or movies that illustrate important ideas from fictional texts. Providing multiple media can stimulate a student's engagement and overall interest in the learning process, which can help them develop critical literature skills to use for future book discussions and assignments. Elementary and middle school students might benefit from a cartoon film, while high schoolers may find value in a sitcom or fictional podcast episode. You can also show a media adaptation of an in-class book to enhance their understanding.

6. Visualize concepts

- Use a chart, graphic or drawing to illustrate important topics and themes in a fictional text. For example, you might use a flowchart to connect one concept to another by writing them in different circles and connecting them with lines. You can also instruct students to draw a certain scene or characters from a text during a lesson, then have a class discuss why they depicted a scene in a certain way or chose one image over another. Students who are visual learners or enjoy artistic expression may especially benefit from this literature skills strategy.

7. Meet with students one-on-one

- To help engage students in the process of learning literature skills, you can meet with students to determine some constructive goals. It may be helpful to evaluate a student's literature capabilities, such as language and reading comprehension, to determine an effective strategy for teaching them literature. You can also discuss a favorite book, movie or another form of media to learn more about their preferences and thought process for discussing fiction. Consider meeting with students on a regular basis to stay updated about their progress.

8. Assign small-group discussions

- Have students discuss a fictional text in small groups for a certain length of time during a lesson. It may be helpful to offer a few guiding questions to frame their thought processes or assign a small writing assignment for them to complete as a team. Consider pairing students who are highly engaged in class materials with a student who's currently improving their strategies. This can encourage collaboration in the classroom and allow students with diverse skill sets to share their resources.

9. Assign creative essay projects

- Offer alternative essay projects to encourage students to improve their literature skills. For example, some students may appreciate an opportunity to film and edit a video based on a literary concept or record a podcast discussing critical themes, symbols or character arcs. Other students may enjoy writing blog-style articles on a moderated website that discusses similar content. It may be helpful to assign a project using an in-class fictional text and create guidelines with similar criteria to an essay prompt, while also allowing students who prefer essay writing to submit more traditional assignments.

10. Host a writer's workshop

- When assigning a writing assignment about a literary text, you can dedicate a part of class time for students to review and critique each other's work. As a result, they may learn new writing strategies from each other, discover new perspectives on the text's core messages and find different ways to analyze different narrative elements. Students can also learn to receive and give feedback, which may teach them how to convey their thoughts about a literary text clearly and effectively.

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