

'The Inchcape Rock' Lesson Plan

Teaching focus

- Theme – poetic justice or karma
- Filling gaps

Engagement

- Write on board: "You reap what you sow"
- Ask students to suggest what it means and to give examples from own experience or from texts?

Explicit teaching

Explain that sometimes stories and poems illustrate ideas like that in the quote; these ideas are called themes.

Scaffolding the reading

Scaffold reading purpose

Going to read a poem: want you to work out how it illustrates the idea that you reap what you sow.

Scaffold background knowledge

Setting: Scotland, about 400 years ago

Scaffold the language

Rover: a pirate

Reading

Exploration

Discuss how the story illustrates the theme.

Explicit teaching

Stories sometimes leave gaps for us to fill in. In this story there are a number of gaps:

- Why Sir Ralph cut the bell
- What happened between Sir Ralph cutting the rope and returning: this is mentioned but only briefly
- What he was thinking when he returned: looking to spend his new wealth? Had he forgotten cutting the rope?

Application

Set the task

Ask students to write the thoughts going through Sir Ralph's mind as he drowns.

Scaffold the task

- Has to be more detailed than 'I wish I hadn't cut the bell'.
- Has to be more dramatic.
- Prompt: they say when people drown their whole life flashes before their eyes like a movie: What might flash before his eyes?

Supervise the task

Teacher walks around monitoring work, praising good efforts and occasionally interrupting class to read out good examples.

Sharing the Results

Volunteers read their work aloud to class.

Review

Point out that there are many poems like 'The Inchcape Rock' which require readers to fill in the gaps. This can add to the enjoyment of reading because it allows us, the readers, to contribute to making the poem make sense. If parts of a poem do not seem to make sense, it might be because the reader has to fill in the gaps.