



MODULE OVERVIEW

USING A STORY-BASED APPROACH IN THE YOUNG LEARNER CLASSROOM



The Story-Based Approach in the Young Learner Classroom

Module Overview

Unit Background

“I’m a Reader”

Wouldn’t we love for our students to not just say this, but identify as this?

Literacy is a key skill and measure of one’s chances of a happy, healthy and successful life. Time and again, studies show that outcomes are greatly improved – academically, socially and economically – when children are read to daily. Reading is considered an essential skill, upon which the acquisition of many other skills depends, but reading has so many benefits, and not just for progress in the target language. Reading for pleasure is part of the meaning-making process, exposing you to vocabulary that you won’t always come across in day-to-day life, and normalising complicated and abstract grammatical structures. Stories extend across multiple subject areas, promote social and emotional learning (like values and diversity), all kinds of thinking skills (critical, creative, sequential, etc), as well as self-regulation and independent learning skills. Stories also exploit opportunities to delve into the two worlds of childhood – fantasy and reality – and expand upon children’s vivid imaginations and natural curiosity about the world around them. Stories are probably included in almost every modern ELT coursebook in some form or another, but how teachers approach their purpose and use them in their teaching differs vastly. We will examine this as a phenomenon within the MENA region, and then examine aspects such as:

- Why stories make for great learning opportunities.
- How to get creative in our approaches to pre-reading and post-reading activities.
- How to create a love of reading by bringing in the home/family
- How to turn students from story listeners to story tellers?

In this professional development module, we will explore the story-based approach in the young learner classroom, with a core aim to develop our young learners from a ‘learn to read’ mindset, to one where they are motivated to both ‘read to learn’ and ‘read for pleasure’.

After all,

*“The best way to improve one’s language skills is to go and live among its speakers,
but the next best way is to read extensively in it”*

C. Nuttall, 2005

Chapter One: Registration and Survey

After submitting the module registration form you will be invited to join our Digital Classroom. Once joined you will complete a short survey introducing yourself and giving some general information regarding your views on, and how you currently approach, the module topic (using stories) in your current teaching practice, as well as your goals/expectations for the module.

Chapter Two: Theoretical

In this chapter you will receive access to a short background reading on the module topic, and some further advised readings if you wish to explore the topic in more depth. To pass the chapter you will need to complete a short summary of the text(s) (max. 250 words). The course leader will then host a live webinar to summarise and contextualise the topic and provide some practical tips for you to develop in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Practical

In this chapter you will need to show evidence of the inclusion of the topic in your teaching. This could include providing examples from your lesson planning, or demonstrating how you have used the suggested practical tasks (although you may choose your own or adapt these as necessary for your context) in your teaching practice. You will need to write a short follow up reflection log to pass the chapter, and this material will also form the basis for the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Collaborative

In this chapter you will be tasked with taking your practice to another level by sharing what you have been doing (it could be with your school team or just with one other teacher - a buddy of your choice, at your school or another – and can include your thoughts, reading summary, and any reflections from the previous chapters) and make a suggested plan for them to use in their own practice. We will also look at bringing parents and families into the process in more detail as well.

Chapter Five: Reflection

In this final chapter you will complete a reflective task, drawing on all of the work done throughout the module.

Completion

We will wrap up with a feedback and Q&A party, and provide a certificate for the module.