

Rationale for Prediction

Prediction is one of the pre-reading activities that I like to have my students participate in. Pre-reading is defined as “activities that are designed to arouse students’ interest, activate their prior knowledge, or pre-teach vocabulary or concepts that may be difficult.” (Tierney and Readance, 2000) (Reading Strategies and Practices: A Compendium 5th Edition)

Pre-reading activities include:

- Motivating
- Activating background knowledge
- Building text-specific knowledge
- Relating the reading to students’ lives
- Pre-teaching vocabulary
- Pre-teaching concepts
- Pre-questioning
- Predicting
- Direction setting
- Suggesting comprehension strategies

Prediction is a reading comprehension strategy that is useful in many ways. Prediction allows the teacher and student to see what they really know and understand about a particular topic. Utilizing a student’s background knowledge and prior knowledge of a topic, they can make “predictions” about what they will think will happen. Inferences can also be made based on what is being stated. Prediction is a great way to facilitate class discussion since each student is “predicting” what they think will happen next. In prediction, a student can take a chance on predicting whatever they think since they do not know what will happen in the book or what the new topic will cover.

When I do prediction in class, I type out the statement and then cut it out. I have the students write responses and then they are collected. At that time, I will read each and every response to the class and let them know if they are “hot” or “cold”. This strategy of reading aloud anonymous responses is also a way to get students to “piggyback” answers if they know that the responses are “hot”. It also allows a student to “get back on track” if their thinking is not aligned with what really is happening in the story. By doing prediction this way, it allows students with more prior knowledge to help out students with less prior knowledge, but without having to put “anyone on the spot”.

Prediction can also be looked at as a form of brainstorming when the entire class is participating and responding to the answers. Oral discussion usually ensues when prediction is done this way and it really does get the students interested in the book that is about to be read or the new topic that is to be learned about.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas by John Boyne

Activity 1-Predict what the title of this book is about.

You will write a different idea on each piece of paper that is given to you. You need to come up with at least two ideas. The papers will be collected and then redistributed to the class and each student will read the predictions.

Activity 2-Category Brainstorm

You will pick a number from random and then groups will be made. At that point, you will try to figure out a category name based on the ideas that you will be given. Only one category name can be used.

For example, banana, hammer, orange, school, wood, apricot

A category might be fruit, and items to build with.

Activity 3-Background to *The Boy Who Wore Striped Pajamas*

This story is told through the eyes of a nine-year old boy, Bruno, who is German. His father is a Commandant in the Nazi Party. He is such a high ranking officer that Adolf Hitler has even been to dinner at Bruno's home. Bruno's father gets a new position and that is to go and take command of "Out-with", which is Bruno's understanding of Auschwitz, a concentration camp in Poland. As a nine-year old boy, Bruno has no understanding of what is about to take place and the impact it will have on him and his family. While at "Out-with", Bruno happens to make friends with a boy named, Schmuel, who is a child that is imprisoned in "Out-with". This is their story. As the author of the book writes, it is a story of two nine-year old boys, but it is not written for nine-year old boys. It is a journey far beyond the understanding of nine-year old children."

Activity 4-Predict what will happen

In this activity, you will predict what will happen during various parts of the story. You will write your response on the paper given to you. They will be collected and read aloud. Use your background knowledge to complete the prediction. Keep in mind the authors words, "this is not a book for nine-year old children". What do you think will happen to these two children based on the background knowledge you possess about this event in history.

Activity 2 Brainstorm Category Words

Holocaust	Treated less than human
Adolf Hitler	Gassed
Fuhrer	Number tattooed on skin
Germany	Men separated from women and children
Poland	Eva Braun
Berlin	Filth
Auschwitz	Dirty clothes
Lice	No shower
“Striped pajamas”	Mistreatment
Star of David	No bed
Shaved Heads	Bleak
Abuse	Forced work assignments
Forced Marches	Empty
Nazi’s	Harsh treatment
Commandant	Sadness
Heil Hitler	Exterminated
Embarrassment	Hopelessness
Indignity	
Gestapo	

Activity 4-Prediction of parts of the book, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*

1. You must always obey your mother. You must never interrupt her when she is speaking. What do you think happens to Bruno when he doesn't follow these dictates?
2. The "Fury" (Führer/Adolf Hitler) visited Bruno's house. What do you think transpired during the dinner?
3. Bruno and his family, as well as the maid, traveled to "Out-with" (Auschwitz). What was the outcome when they arrived at "Out-with"?
4. Bruno had nothing to do at "Out-with" due to the circumstances that were never explained to him. He had no toys, no friends, and no place to "explore" like he had loved to do in Berlin with his three best friends. One day, he made a tire swing. He fell off of the tire swing and had really gotten hurt. The butler, Pavel, treated him. Who was Pavel, and how did this impact Bruno?
5. Bruno's mother arrived home from shopping after he had been hurt on the tire swing. She told Bruno that they would tell his father that she had tended to him when he was hurt. Why couldn't they admit that it was Pavel that had tended to Bruno?

6. One day Bruno went out “exploring” even though he had been explicitly told not to. He came upon a barbed wire fence that he followed for what he believed to be miles. At the end of the fence, he came upon a boy who was on the other side of the fence. What happened?

7. One day Bruno went to the kitchen to get something to eat. When he entered the kitchen there was a Nazi Lieutenant and a small boy. The boy was Schmucl. Why was Schmucl there, and what happened?

8. Bruno’s father had a young lieutenant, Lt. Kotler, over to dinner one night. During the course of the dinner, it came to light that the lieutenant’s father had fled Germany and was now teaching literature in Switzerland. What do you think happened at dinner?

9. Bruno and Schmucl continued to meet at the fence marking their boundaries. One day, Schmucl said that his Dad was missing and that he could not be found anywhere. What happens next?

10. Bruno enters “Out-with” in disguise. He is dressed in “striped pajamas” that Schmucl is able to get. What happens to Bruno in the camp? What happens to Schmucl in the camp?

