

Lesson 5: Creating a Visual Image

Newspaper Focus: News and Feature Stories

Background – Students are better able to comprehend what they read when they remain engaged with the text. One strategy many good readers use is to create mental pictures of the text while they are reading. The ability to create visual images acts as both a mark of comprehension and a tool for remembering what is read. In this activity, students will actively and intentionally create mental pictures to express their understanding of a news or feature story. With practice, they can develop this strategy until it becomes automatic.

Before Reading: Introduce the Lesson

- 1) Ask students to think about a book they have read that was also made into a movie, such as the “Harry Potter” series. With a show of hands, determine which students read the books first and which saw the movies first.
- 2) Have students discuss their experiences. How many were disappointed in the movies because they had visualized characters and events differently when they read the books? How many liked seeing the movies first because they helped them understand the stories better?
- 3) Discuss with students how the ability to create mental pictures of what they read can help them understand and remember the text.

During Reading: Direct Instruction

- 1) Distribute newspapers to students. Direct them to a news or feature story you have chosen in advance. Explain that you are going to model a visualization strategy for them.
- 2) Model the visualization strategy. Read the headline and describe the pictures the headline conjures up in your mind. Do a quick sketch on the board.
- 3) Read the story aloud. Talk about the pictures you see in your mind and do a quick sketch at a point where you have sufficient information to do so.
- 4) Explain that this is not a measure of your artistic ability – stick figures and cartoon drawings are fine. This is not art; it is comprehending what you read.
- 5) After you have finished reading the story and creating your sketches, have students retell the story from your sketches. Explain that their ability to remember and retell the story from the sketches shows how useful it is to create mental pictures while they read.
- 6) Distribute the Lesson 5 activity sheet, *Make a Mental Picture*. Have students work in pairs or small groups to complete the activity.

After Reading: Reflect and Review

- 1) Have students discuss their experiences. Was it easy or difficult to create the pictures? How did they decide which images to create? Could they retell the story from their pictures?
- 2) Explain that in this activity, they drew pictures on paper. However, when they read on their own, they should practice creating pictures in their imagination.

Performance Rubric

Expectation: The student was able to ...	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Revisit
Draw a picture that reflected key elements of the story			
Compare different sketches			
Evaluate the level of completeness in his/her own drawing			

Student Activity Sheet 5: Make a Mental Picture

You can improve how well you understand what you read by creating pictures in your imagination that represent what you are reading.

- ✎ Work with one or two other classmates on this activity. Together, pick a news or feature story from the newspaper, or use a story that your teacher has chosen.
- ✎ Read the story silently and try to picture in your mind what's happening. Then draw a picture about the story in the space below.
- ✎ After you have finished your picture, share it with your classmates. Use the questions below to help you compare your pictures.

Headline _____

Draw your picture here.

Compare your picture with the pictures of your classmates.

Newspaper "Five Ws and the H"	Were your pictures the same or different?	Why do you think you drew different pictures?
Who		
What		
Where		
When		
Why		
How		
Other details		