

Hot Seating a Character

Oral Language Strategy Sheet

If we really want students to understand characters as they appear in texts, we need them to metaphorically walk in the shoes of those characters or get into the skin of the characters. After having read the text(s) students pose as a character they have encountered and having other students question them about their actions and motivations from the text, will make the student in the persona of the chosen character think more deeply about why he/she acted the way he/she did and deepen the understanding of that character for those asking the questions.

Learning Outcomes

By choosing to engage in this activity, the following learning outcomes will naturally be encountered:

OL1, OL2; OL3, OL5, OL13 R2, R6

Key Skills

Communicating
Working with Others
Managing Information and Thinking
Literacy

Student Friendly Learning Intentions: Students will...

Communicate with each other to find out/share information
Create rich questions to extract necessary information
Analyse and synthesise information
Reflect on their learning

Preparation

Students will read a text-poem, drama, film, novel or multimodal text

Instructions

1. Identify the character(s) from the text that you wish students to understand more deeply.
2. Identify those students whom you wish to become the chosen characters. [Choose 3 or 4 students for each chosen character].
3. Have students meet together in like-character groups. In these groups, students will discuss character traits and come up with possible questions that the rest of the class may wish to ask that character and discuss possible answers to those questions, based on how the character acted in the novel.
4. While the students in character discuss possible questions and agree on uniform responses for these questions, other members of the class will each compile a series of questions-open questions-they wish to ask the various characters who will be 'hot-seated'. The teacher might model possible open questions.
5. If there are a number of different characters portrayed, have these different characters sit together during the questioning as questions asked and answers given, may spark other characters to interject with their views. By doing this, it allows for exchanges between the various characters and this interaction might act as a catalyst for students to develop further questions they might not have compiled and thus deepen their understanding of a character.
6. It is important that all students get the opportunity to question characters.
7. A teacher might then select a 'panel' of characters from all like characters and hold an open forum question and answer session.

Assessment

Self-assessment; peer assessment; teacher observation; self-reflection.

Extension Activities

This could be developed into writing activities with the following learning outcomes in mind: W3, W12