1. Title: Improving students’ motivation to read English and reading skills

2. Context:
   (1) Level: 3rd year students of junior high school
   (2) Class size: 38 students
   (3) Time: 45 or 50-minute-class, 4 classes per week
   (4) Textbook: New Horizon English Course 3
   (5) Problems:
      a. Levels of students are very different.
      b. Students did not have opportunities to use much English. They were taught in the grammar-translation method last year.
      c. They need to be able to read long passages in the textbook and entrance examinations.

3. Goal: Students can read English passages consisting of over 200 words fluently.

4. What I did
   (1) Reading the textbook
      a. Oral interaction
      b. Giving meanings of new words and phrases
      c. Questions in Japanese (main idea)
      d. True or false questions
      e. Questions and answers (with some personal questions)
      f. Talking in pairs
      g. Giving attention to words and phrases
   (2) Reading "Easy True Stories"
      a. Telling a story with nine pictures (explaining unknown words and checking students' comprehension)
      b. Silent reading (timing reading speed)
      c. Vocabulary and comprehension quizzes
      d. Discussion

5. Results
   I asked 2 classes of students to answer a questionnaire about reading at the end of February.

Q1: How do you read English passages?
   About half of students guess meaning from parts they can understand, while around one third of students try to understand by phrases (see Graph 1).
Q2: Which stories you read in class were interesting for you?
(The numbers in the parentheses show the number of students who answered.)

The textbook
   Unit 6 Break the Barrier (11)
   Let's Read 2 Roy Brown - Boy Detective (11)
   Let's Read 1 A Mother's Lullaby (10)
   Unit 5 Electronic Dictionaries - For or Against (7)
   Let's Read 3 An Artist in the Arctic (5)
   Unit 2 A Fireworks Festival (4)
   Unit 3 Fair Trade Chocolate (4)
   Unit 4 Learn by Losing (2)
   Multi Plus 3 (Challenge) Japanese around the World (1)

Easy True Stories
   Unit 4 Yawning Is Contagious (23)
   Unit 3 There's Something in the Mattress (8)
   Unit 1 The Color TVs (6)
Q3: Has your speed of reading English increased since April?
   Over 80% of students answered their speed had increased. 5% of them have improved greatly and about 40% of them increased somewhat and a little respectively.

Graph 2: Has your speed of reading English increased since April?

- Yes, greatly. 17%
- Yes, somewhat. 5%
- Yes, a little. 37%
- No change. 41%

Q4: Has your reading comprehension improved since April?
   About 90% of students improved their reading comprehension skills. Like reading speed, around 40% of them became somewhat or a little better respectively. 10% of them could improve greatly.

Graph 3: Has your reading comprehension improved since April?

- Yes, greatly. 11%
- Yes, somewhat. 10%
- Yes, a little. 38%
- No change. 41%

Q5: How do you think your reading comprehension can be improved?
(The numbers in the parentheses show the number of students who answered.)

Reading
- Practice many times. (10)
- Read repeatedly. (5)
- Read English books. (3)
- Read English every day. (1)
- Read the textbook. (1)
- Read a lot of English sentences with timing. (1)
- Work on reading comprehension quizzes. (1)
Integration
Read and write English. (3)
Read, write and speak a lot of English. (1)
Read, write and listen to English. (1)
Listen to English CDs every day. (1)

Motivation
Get interested. (3)
Be willing to read English. (1)
Enjoy studying. (1)

Exposure to English
Continue to study. (5)
Be exposed to English. (2)
Be familiar with English. (2)
Go abroad. (3)

Vocabulary and grammar
Learn vocabulary. (16)
Learn grammar and vocabulary. (4)
Read checking vocabulary. (2)
Read understanding grammar. (1)
Learn vocabulary and read slowly. And then read many times. (1)

Translation
Practice translating English into Japanese. (5)

Strategy
Read Japanese translation and English sentences alternately and learn the meanings of the words. (3)
Review what we learn and take notes. (1)
Practice speaking and talk with foreigners. (1)
Understand the subject in a sentence. (1)
Image the story. (1)
Read an English sentence from the beginning to the end. (1)
Check unknown words after guessing the meanings. (1)
Q6: Is it difficult to read English?
Q7: Do you like to read English?

As these questions were on the back of the questionnaire sheet, some students did not notice them and failed to answer. Therefore it is difficult to compare the results in July and February, but there seems to be no big difference.

6. What I learned

As the students did not show much interest with attitude and facial expressions while reading in class, the results of Question 2 were interesting for me. Especially the story "Yawning Is Contagious" was the most popular. I asked one of the AET to tell the story in class. She attracted students' attention with gestures and interested them. I think it influenced the results.

Other interesting results were from Question 5 "How do you think your reading comprehension can be improved?" Students wrote more variety of answers than I expected. Giving students Japanese translation is a good way to save classtime and some students make use of it by themselves.

7. Future issues

Although it depends on students' ability to read English, some stories in the textbook are too long and difficult for some students and they include many unknown words. If time permits, I will let students read more interesting stories, integrating other activities, such as listening, speaking and writing.
Lesson Plan: Unit 4, Easy True Stories

Takemi Morioka
Takinomizu Junior High School

1. Level: 3rd graders of junior high school

2. Class size: 38 students

3. Textbook: New Horizon English Course 3 (Tokyo Shoseki)

   Easy True Stories, Longman

4. Goal: To improve students' reading comprehension ability and fluency

5. Objectives:
   (1) Students learn some vocabulary and can understand the story.
   (2) Students enjoy reading a story in English.

6. Procedure
   Day one:
   (1) Listening to the story and answering questions
       The AET tells students the story and asks some questions about it.
   (2) Silent reading 1
       Students read the story silently and record their time.
   (3) Vocabulary
       Students fill in the blanks in the handout.
   (4) Comprehension
       Students answer the questions in the handout.
   (5) Writing
       Students brainstorm and share their ideas in the whole class.
   (6) Silent reading 2
       Students read the story silently and record their time. They calculate their reading speed.
   (7) Evaluation
       Students answer the two questions.

2. Is this story easy or difficult for you to read?


3. Evaluation

WHERE DO YOUR DREAMS LIKE TO DO BEST IN ENGLISH ЧЕМУ? 40

How many people play a game? 27

How can you dream? How many people play a game next to those things?

Look over the list. What do you like to do very much? Put a star (+) next to those things.

6. ...5...

4.

3.

2.

In our English class we...

On the blackboard. Then, copy the last page.

Remember to organize your dream on the wall, but the last page. Your teacher will write the last step, and your dream is written on the wall. You do in your English class. Do you read more? Do you write? Do you read more?

In our own school, the students are teaching a story, what do we do?

WARNING

6. Can and all pain because pain is a punishment.

5. Can and all pain because pain is an interest.

4. The evaporation process does not require a roof.

3. The evaporation process is the water's journey to the sky.

2. In the afternoon he goes to an adult school.

1. Clean works at a factory in the city.

WHICH SENSES IS CORRECT OR NOT

REMEMBERING DETAILS

1. The story is about volunteers. When one person knows other people.

2. The story is about volunteers.

3. The story is about volunteers.

4. The story is about volunteers.

5. The story is about volunteers.

6. The story is about volunteers.

I CLEAN your brains. He is...

A. The story is about volunteers.

B. The story is about volunteers.

C. The story is about volunteers.

D. The story is about volunteers.

E. The story is about volunteers.

Understanding the main idea

3. COMPREHENSION

...
# Reading Speed Record

| wpm | 300 | 295 | 290 | 285 | 280 | 275 | 270 | 265 | 260 | 255 | 250 | 245 | 240 | 235 | 230 | 225 | 220 | 215 | 210 | 205 | 200 | 195 | 190 | 185 | 180 | 175 | 170 | 165 | 160 | 155 | 150 | 145 | 140 | 135 | 130 | 125 | 120 | 115 | 110 | 105 | 100 | 95 | 90 | 85 | 80 | 75 | 70 | 65 | 60 | 55 | 50 |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|     | 300 | 295 | 290 | 285 | 280 | 275 | 270 | 265 | 260 | 255 | 250 | 245 | 240 | 235 | 230 | 225 | 220 | 215 | 210 | 205 | 200 | 195 | 190 | 185 | 180 | 175 | 170 | 165 | 160 | 155 | 150 | 145 | 140 | 135 | 130 | 125 | 120 | 115 | 110 | 105 | 100 | 95 | 90 | 85 | 80 | 75 | 70 | 65 | 60 | 55 | 50 |

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Class ( ) No.( ) Name ( )