

**Singing the Words:
Using Music to Teach and Encourage Reading
WMEA, October, 2009**

Vocal warm-ups.

- Snake
- Bee
- Hum
- Ma
- Throw the ball (Follow the trajectory with pitch of a soft object thrown from person to person)
- Alien (Make shapes with your finger of strange pitches, have students echo.)
- Sing letter shapes (Make a letter shape (backwards) and have students make pitches along with you. Short vowels)
- Cat and dog with hands (Have students echo a scene with cat and dog interacting)

So Many Ways to Be Smart

Comprehension

1. Visualizing Sensory Details
2. Questioning
3. Schema
4. Synthesis
5. Inference
6. Determining Importance

Jenifer Montgomery Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 1-4

Subjects: Reading, Music

Duration: 20 minutes

Description: In this lesson, students use reading comprehension strategies to explore meaning and sequence of a story told in song.

Goals:

1. To introduce, identify, and use six reading comprehension strategies to extract meaning from a song.
2. To create empathy and understanding about disability.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to use each comprehension strategy to gain meaning from a song's lyrics.
2. Students will be aware of the process of reading comprehension.
3. Students will be able to identify challenges and opportunities involved with including people with disabilities.

Materials: CD player and copy of "Jenifer Montgomery." Lyric sheet and projector (Optional)

Procedure:

Begin song

Jennifer Montgomery was the first friend that I made.
I was new to Lincoln School. We were both in third grade.
The first week of September, in the water fountain line

Stop song.

**Ask for students to imagine sensory details of the scene.
(Visualize Details.)**

Jenifer Montgomery was the first friend that I made.
I was new to Lincoln School. We were both in third grade.
The first week of September, in the water fountain line
She turned around and suddenly spoke to me in sign.

Stop song. Ask students what they can guess about Jenifer. (Inference)

At first I didn't get it when I saw her standing there.
Her hands were making shapes and waving in the air.
But Jenifer kept trying, until I got it through my head.
I finally figured out that this was what she said.

Stop song. Ask for students' questions about the song so far. Encourage a wide range of questions. (Questioning)

"I can hear with my eyes, I can talk with my hands.
I can do anything if I believe I can.
I can hear with my eyes, I can talk with my hands,
And you might be surprised at all I understand."

We held our conversations at recess in the yard.
At first, communication was kind of slow and hard.
But Jennifer was patient and I learned to finger spell.
By Christmas vacation, I could say as well.

Stop song. Have students share an experience with a deaf person they may have had in their own lives. Have students share a book, story or movie they have seen which included a deaf person. Have students share their experience with a deaf person they have heard about in the world. (Schema)

"I can hear with my eyes, I can talk with my hands.
I can do anything if I believe I can.
I can hear with my eyes, I can talk with my hands,
And you might be surprised at all I understand."

Some of the other kids in school
Would laugh at Jenny and be cruel.
I thought my teacher would understand.
So I talked to her and we came up with a plan.

**Stop song. Ask students what they think will happen next.
(Predicting)**

The next day my homeroom teacher said, "Listen closely, class.
We're got a brand new subject, which everyone must pass."
I smiled like a tiger when my friend Jenny came
Right up by the blackboard and showed every one her name.

**Stop song. Ask students to identify the most important parts of
the song so far. (Importance)**

At first kids were complaining as she taught us everyday,
But learning someone's language helps you see things their way.
Every week a few more kids would ask Jenny to play
When school let out for summer, our whole class could sign and say.

"We can hear with our eyes, we can talk with our hands.
We can do anything, if we believe we can.
We can hear with our eyes, we can talk with our hands,
And you might be surprised at all we understand."

Ask students to suggest a song title. (Synthesis)

**Sing chorus of song together. Project words if necessary.
(Closure)**

How to use other songs that may work with this approach

1. Story songs
2. Lyrics intelligible
3. Familiar versus unfamiliar
4. Some songs to consider
 - Cats in the Cradle by Harry Chapin
 - The Edmund Fitzgerald by Gordon Lightfoot
 - Puff the Magic Dragon by Peter Paul and Mary
 - Froggy Went A Courtin' traditional
 - Clementine

Assessment: Observe students participation during group discussions.

Bibliography

Storytelling

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