



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #406: Movement and Literacy

Overview

Synthesising movement with literacy instruction in middle to upper primary provides students with a multidimensional approach to communication and comprehension. By physicalising language and narrative structures, educators can strengthen memory retrieval and enhance focus during complex linguistic tasks. This active methodology supports diverse learning profiles by offering varied opportunities for students to explore expression through physical action, ultimately building confidence and deepening their understanding of textual analysis within a dynamic classroom environment.

Key Teaching Ideas

Effective literacy instruction through movement focuses on connecting physical actions with specific vocabulary, syntax, and thematic meaning. Teachers can design experiences that encourage students to create and express themselves while navigating literary concepts, ensuring that movement serves as a cognitive bridge to deeper comprehension. By facilitating collaborative tasks that require students to share and reflect on their physical representations of text, educators can foster stronger communication skills and a more robust understanding of language dynamics.

Practical Application

- **Narrative Event Through Movement:** Lead students to act out key verbs or pivotal story events to support deep comprehension and emotional engagement during a Year 4 shared reading session.
- **Collaborative Scenes:** Direct small groups to create freeze frames representing critical scenes from a class novel to analyse character motivations and plot development.
- **Active Spelling Sequences:** Implement movement-based spelling challenges where students navigate a pre-defined path while reciting letter patterns to reinforce word recognition and orthographic memory.
- **Reflective Dialogue Trails:** Facilitate paired 'walk and talk' discussions around specific literary prompts to promote active thinking and refine oral communication skills.
- **Sequential Story Mapping:** Guide students to sequence narrative events using locomotor patterns to demonstrate a clear understanding of chronological order and story structure.



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Next Steps

Visit the [Active Education Australia website](https://www.activeeducationaustralia.edu.au) to explore innovative ways to integrate movement into your literacy blocks and bring language to life in the classroom.

References and Research

1. Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (v9) – Supports the integration of movement to enhance learning outcomes across the primary curriculum.
2. Australian Curriculum: Literacy – Outlines the importance of diverse expressive modes in developing student communication and comprehension skills.
4. Australian Sport Commission: Physical Literacy Framework – Details the cognitive and social benefits of purposeful movement in educational settings.