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OBSERVATION SKILLS

OBJECTIVE

The students will refine their observation skills.

MOTIVATION

Plan a classroom interruption with a colleague to illustrate the need for careful observation. Have your associate wear something bizarre but deliver a normal message. Test the students' memories by asking questions about the normal aspects of the visit.

MATERIALS

- transparency and student copies of Street Scene, overhead projector, pens
- student copies of Bird's-eye View #1, Have You Noticed? and Everyday Observations.

PROCEDURE

1. Use the classroom interruption described above to discuss the need to be a careful observer. We use the facts from observations to draw conclusions and form opinions.
2. Distribute copies of Street Scene, instructing the group to keep them face down. Tell the class they will have one minute to study Street Scene; they will then turn it face down again and answer the questions about it. At the end of one minute, distribute copies of Bird's-eye View #1. Use the transparency so the class can review their answers together.
3. To reinforce the effort that accurate observation requires, have the students fill out the "I Remember" column in Have You Noticed? in class. Then assign the "Observation" column as homework. As the Motivation incident demonstrated, we often fail to take careful notice of what is familiar or ordinary.
4. To introduce the concept "thinking about thinking," ask students to answer the first five questions on the worksheet Everyday Observations, but read them to the class without pauses for thinking time. Your class will show frustration. Then assure the group they will have plenty of time to think through the assignment; they have just demonstrated that good thinking takes time!
When reviewing the answers, have the students explain how they recalled their observations. Praise careful thinking rather than correct answers.

EVALUATION

Withhold any evaluative or scoring procedures you normally use. Stress that we all can improve our memories through practice.

Answer Key

EVERYDAY OBSERVATIONS 1. Both. 2. Right. 3. No. 4. Yes. 5. Noon; dawn or sunset. 6. West. 7. False. 8. False. 9. After. 10. When the humidity is high and the glass is cold. 11. Ice. 12. First. 13. Head first. 14. Away from the sun. 15. East to west. 16. The oil floats. 17. Octagon, triangle, rectangle. 18. a 65 cm tyre

REMEMBERING WITH THE MIND'S EYE

OBJECTIVE

The students will use "the mind's eye" to improve their memories.

MOTIVATION

Play an old parlor game by displaying the transparency of Granny's Attic (p. 19) for 30 seconds. Then have the students list as many objects from the picture as they can recall. Display the transparency again and have them record the number of items they recalled correctly. Tell the students they will be working on tricks to improve their memories.

MATERIALS

- transparency of Granny's Attic
- transparencies of Complex Creations (prepare these far enough in advance to color them)
- student copies of The Mind's Eye

PROCEDURE

1. Use the results of the game Granny's Attic to emphasize the importance of visualization as a memory aid.
2. Have the students read the directions for The Mind's Eye. Project Complex Creation #1 for one minute and have the students complete the rest of the steps independently. Project #1 again so the students can check their responses. Repeat these steps with Complex Creations #2 to #5 for four successive lessons. Conduct a discussion around the students' concluding statements on the worksheets.

EVALUATION

Make this series of assignments a "win" for every student by stressing that the goal is to improve visual memory; it is not to get the most "right answers." Have the students pause whenever appropriate to visualize a concept or a series of steps in this and any lesson.

