Teaching of Inference Making in the Adolescent Classroom

Meagan DeSalvo
Illinois Wesleyan University

Leah Nillas, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc

Part of the Education Commons

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by The Ames Library, the Andrew W. Mellon Center for Curricular and Faculty Development, the Office of the Provost and the Office of the President. It has been accepted for inclusion in Digital Commons @ IWU by the faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.
Inference is making predictions, drawing conclusions, using context clues, activating background knowledge, filling gaps, creating interpretations, and visualizing meaning (Bintz, 2012).

METHODS

- Non-traditional: 23%
- Verbal: 27%
- Visual: 9%
- Example: 13%
- Explicit: 14%
- Reminder: 14%

Figure 1. Techniques are not limited to paper assessments. Student understanding is improved with multiple methods.

Results and Data Analysis

- Positive student responses to scaffolded questioning techniques were supported through analysis of field notes.
- Field notes pointed towards effective group and peer collaboration in enhancing inference making abilities.
- The use of nontraditional texts increased student engagement and performance.
- Reminders of inference making techniques and strategies are necessary in helping students stray from the normal question and answer process.
- Scaffolded and additional questioning improved students’ performance on assessments.
- Activating prior knowledge engages students in the text and hence involves higher order thinking skills.

Conclusion

- Findings suggest that students benefit from both verbal and written scaffolded questioning in response to assessment questions requiring inference making.
- An array of tools aids students in recognizing inference making in traditional texts.
- Further study is required in the development over time of students’ ability to respond to inference making assessments.