**Cloze Exercise**

The Cloze Activity is a tool to promote thinking, and debate about what constitutes the best or acceptable answer; participants need to justify their choice. They use context cues to enable them to do this. The procedure is to present a piece of text in which words are deleted from the passage according various criteria. The passage is presented to students, who insert words as they read to complete and construct meaning from the text.

**BEFORE**

Teacher needs to:

* Produce the Cloze Activity text – it can be written on the board, flip chart, prepared on paper or a power point.
* Decide which lesson, and when in the lesson the activity will be used
* Decide what understanding s/he wants to check
* Rehearse the organisation and introduction to students (if first time use)
  + Model the activity- give out the **cloze exercise** to the students and ask them to fill in the gaps, on their own.
  + Teacher asks what answers students have for the first gap (there should be several; if not teacher should provide an alternate answer to promote debate)
  + Ask students to justify their answers, and consider whether each answer is acceptable (think about meaning, cues from the meaning, the context, the structure)
  + It is necessary for the teacher to continue to reinforce that it is not about right/wrong but justifying the answer and that many answers may be acceptable. Students can endorse or challenge each other’s thinking. The activity needs to be carefully managed so that students consider the validity of the answers.
* Consider how to assist struggling learners eg
  + Language- check meanings of words
  + Prompt (give key words)
* Extension or subsequent use might be students designing their own cloze activity to use with classmates

**DURING**

* Teacher explains that
  + this is not a test
  + this is a tool that will help the teacher know what students understand
  + therefore students need to work independently
* Teacher may observe when she gives students the activity:
  + Student readiness (some may resist first time around)
  + Student ability to work on their own
  + And provide a prompt, especially if first time (but not do the activity!)
* Teacher roves
  + observing/listening to students making, justifying and discussing their choices
  + observing/listening to students critically analysing possibilities

**AFTER**

* Teacher will decide
  + What to do with the completed cloze exercises – students could paste in their books
  + Encourage students to edit their cloze (in different colour) – and explain why the change
* Teacher will
  + Make notes about misunderstandings or gaps in students understanding
  + Give feedback (briefly) to the class about the way in which they worked, a few specific points about what s/he noted they had all understood
  + Form a needs-based group to follow up next day, if necessary (planning may have to be altered) or whole class if a specific point not understood by all.

**Using a cloze exercise**

Teachers actively teach and students actively learn.

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate by employing a well-used tool, ‘gap filling’, how this may be made adapted to become an active learning tool.

The Cloze test is what teachers tend to use in their worksheets – there is one right answer which they fill in; the teacher reinforces what this answer is, students provide the answer.

The Cloze activity is a tool to promote thinking, and debate about what constitutes the best or acceptable answer; participants need to justify their choice. They use context cues to enable them to do this. Highlight for participants the directed nature of cloze but the active nature for learners.

Activity

Part 1: Cloze test

* Trainer will give the **cloze test** to the participants and ask them to fill in the gaps.
* Trainer then goes through and gives the correct answers. There is no debate.
* Trainer asks participants to put the test aside, or collects it back in (or it could be on the reverse).

Part 2: Cloze exercise

* Trainer will now give out the **cloze exercise** to the participants and ask them to fill in the gaps.
* Trainer then directs the discussion, and asks:
  + What answers participants have for the first gap (there should be several; if not trainer should provide an alternate answer to promote debate)
  + Asks group members to justify their answers, and consider whether each answer is acceptable (think about meaning, cues)
    - eg Gap 1 *It is essential/imperative/important/expected/required –* these have shades of meaning. If ‘*essential’* then where is that mandated? If ‘*expected’*, then teachers have a choice. If *‘important’*, then emphasising the link between teacher practice and pedagogy.
  + It is necessary for the trainer to continue to reinforce that it is not about right/wrong but justifying the answer, and that many answers may be acceptable. Participants can endorse or challenge each others’ thinking. The activity needs to be carefully managed so that participants consider the validity of the answers.
* Conclusion
  + This activity, while still teacher directed, becomes an active learning strategy.
  + Students understand that it is not merely the answer but the thinking behind the answer that is important.
  + Students, with practice, gain confidence in expressing their reasoning.

1. Cloze Test

*It is essential that educators working with adolescent learners know about relevant research, so that they can be sure that their practice aligns with such research. The ‘Successful Schools’ research highlights the importance of “knowledgeable educators [who] understand research and students”. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs also focuses on the affective domain, an important aspect of adolescent learning. Dale’s Cone of Learning reminds us that active learners are much more likely to remember and be able to apply what they learn to new situations, such as problem solving. Whether through direct instruction or a guided inquiry students need to be actively engaged in their own learning. “Learning is not a spectator sport”.*

*Words:*

1. *Adolescent*
2. *Successful*
3. *Knowledgeable*
4. *Hierarchy*
5. *Learning*
6. *Instruction*
7. *spectator*
8. **Cloze Exercise**

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*Possible words:*

1. *essential/imperative/important/expected/required – these have shades of meaning.*
2. *relevant/specific/up-to-date – research that relates to adolescent learning in this case. Up-to-date is debatable, in this context*
3. *highlights/signals/emphasizes/ - each of these indicates the importance of educators being knowledgeable, as a key aspect of successful schools.*
4. *focuses*
5. *need NB.*

