

TEACHING OF PROSE

According to *Coleridge*, "Prose is words in their best order." There is a need of a pre-planned lesson plan for teaching prose. Different scholars have suggested different types of lesson plans. According to the *Herbartian* steps, there should be the following steps in a lesson plan for teaching a prose lesson. These steps are strictly on 'Apperceptionistic View' according to which "Learning is to link an old idea with a new idea." Steps given below should be followed after writing these marginal entries—lesson plan number, date, schools, class, section, period, subject and topic.

(1) Aims

The aims can be put under two headings :

General Aims

- (i) To enable students to understand the passage and grasp its meaning.
- (ii) To enable the pupils to read English passage loudly with correct pronunciation, stress, intonation and articulation of voice.
- (iii) To enable them to understand the passage by silent reading.

- (iv) To enrich their active and passive vocabularies.
- (v) To enable them to express ideas of the passage orally and in writing.
- (vi) To enable them to enjoy reading and writing.
- (vii) To enable them to acquire knowledge contained in the lesson.
- (viii) To develop their imaginative powers.
- (ix) To prepare them for world citizenship.

Specific Aims

Specific aims vary according to the subject-matter of the prose lessons. A prose lesson may be descriptive, a story, biography, play or an essay. The specific aims of these types of prose lessons are :

(a) Descriptive :

- (i) To acquaint pupils with the style of the writer.
- (ii) To develop the imaginative power of students.
- (iii) To develop in students a love for natural objects.

(b) Story :

- (i) To give knowledge of some facts through the story.
- (ii) To teach some lesson through the story.
- (iii) To train students' character.
- (iv) To acquaint them with the style of story writing.

(c) Essay :

- (i) To make students gain knowledge.
- (ii) To make them curious about the subject of the essay.
- (iii) To acquaint them with the style of essay-writing.
- (iv) To enable them to arrange ideas in a systematic way.

(d) Biography :

- (i) To get students acquainted with the lives and deeds of great men.
- (ii) To show them the path of character building.
- (iii) To increase their love for aspiration.
- (iv) To inculcate in them desirable sentiments.

(e) Play :

- (i) To teach students with play-way method.

- (ii) Giving them opportunities for self-expression.
- (iii) To make them speak English language in a conversational style.
- (iv) To make them play different roles.
- (v) To build their character.

(2) Preparation

English is a foreign language and Indian students find it difficult. So, teachers should try to motivate students to study the lesson. Whatever they do to attract students to learn the lesson, is called 'preparation of the lesson'. Under this, the following items are to be considered :

I. Material Aids. The teacher should use the various material aids, so that he can make the lesson interesting and enable students to understand the lesson with ease and enjoyment. But he should be cautious of the fact that unnecessary and superfluous material is neither desirable nor effective.

II. Previous Knowledge. The teacher should know how much knowledge students already possess regarding the lesson, so that the teacher can give new knowledge by linking it with their past knowledge. In this way, he can get pupils connect the new and past experiences mentally and learn the matter.

III. Introduction. The introduction has two purposes :

- (i) To bring the past knowledge to consciousness.
- (ii) To attract students' attention to the new subject.

So, the teacher should first ask some questions to test the previous knowledge of students and then link that to the subject to be taught.

IV. Statement of Aim. Psychologically, the learner should have a clear cut objective before him, so that he can strive to achieve that. Therefore, the teacher should state the aim of teaching.

(3) Presentation

This is the main part of the lesson plan. To present the lesson before pupils interestingly and efficiently, the teacher should teach the lesson in two or more units. If the lesson is very short, only one unit should be made. The following sub-steps should be followed in both the units :

I. Model Reading. This model reading should be done by the teacher. Its purpose is to enable students to know the exact way of reading. So, the teacher should try to read with correct

pronunciation, intonation and stress. He should also be particular about pause, articulation and expression. Before doing model reading, he should give instructions to students regarding postures, opening of the book and attention. While reading, he should not absorb himself completely in the book. He should give some attention to students also. He should hold the book in his hand.

II. Pronunciation Drill. After model reading there should be the pronunciation drill. The selection of words for pronunciation drill should not be on the basis of meaning but the basis should be to demark the words which are more likely to be pronounced wrongly by the students. These words should be written on the blackboard one by one and then the drill should be conducted. This drill can be done before or after the model reading by the teacher.

III. Loud Reading. This reading should be done by students. Two or three students should be asked to read aloud. Other students should follow the lesson in their books. The following points should be kept in mind in this regard :

- (i) The errors of pronunciation must be corrected at the end of the reading.
- (ii) Students should be asked to keep the book one feet away from the eyes.
- (iii) They should hold the book in the left hand while the right hand should be kept free.
- (iv) All students should sit or stand in proper postures.

IV. Exposition and Explanation. The purpose of exposition and explanation are :

- (i) To clear the meaning of difficult words, phrases and idioms.
- (ii) To make the comprehension of passage easy.
- (iii) To pave way for intensive reading.

The teacher can employ the following methods for exposition of words :

(1) **Direct Method.** The meaning is taught by showing the object, picture or by doing some action.

(2) **Translation Method.** In this method, the meaning of words is told by translating it into the mother-tongue. This method is not very effective. It should only be used when the teacher is not in a position of using other methods.

(3) **Usage Method.** In this method, the meaning is elicited by using words in sentences. The sentences should be such as to make the meaning clear.

(4) **Similar Word Method.** By giving words of similar meaning, the meaning of words can be elicited.

(5) **Contrast Word Method.** In this method, words with contrasting meanings are used.

(6) **Derivation Method.** By telling how the word was formed or from where the word was derived, its meaning can be explained.

(7) **Reference Method.** By telling the cultural or social story or reference (if any), the meaning can be elicited.

After exposition, the teacher should explain in brief the difficult portions and references of the passage.

V. Silent Reading. This reading is done by students. The purpose of it is :

- (i) To enable students to read silently.
- (ii) To pave the way for extensive readings, and
- (iii) To bring students back to the passage after the exposition and explanation.

For a good silent reading, the teacher should keep the following instructions in mind :

- (i) The lips of pupils should not move.
- (ii) The whole class should be quiet.
- (iii) The posture of students should be appropriate.
- (iv) The teacher should supervise the whole class.
- (v) Pupils should be given judicious time for silent reading.

VI. Comprehension Questions. After the silent reading, some questions should be asked to test pupils comprehension of the passage. This can be done as follows :

- (i) By asking meaning,
 - (ii) By asking questions on main portions of the passage,
 - (iii) By asking the gist,
 - (iv) By asking to describe the passage in their own words,
- and
- (v) By asking figures of speech, phrases, idioms of the passage.

The purpose of asking 'comprehensive questions' is :

- (i) To elicit the meaning of words etc.
- (ii) To test if students have understood the passage.
- (iii) To draw their attention to the main reference.
- (iv) To improve their expression in spoken language, and
- (v) To make them contrast ideas.

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(4) Recapitulation

After teaching the lesson in one or more units, there should be recapitulation of the lesson. The purpose of it is to know :

- (i) If the students have learnt what has been taught.
- (ii) If they are able to derive the gist of the passage.
- (iii) If they are able to transfer their learning to other situations.

The recapitulation is generally done with the help of questions. These questions are different from comprehension questions. The questions should have the following characteristics :

- (i) The answers to such questions should be long.
- (ii) The questions should be from all the passages taught in different units.
- (iii) The questions should demand logical thinking on pupils' part.

The recapitulatory questions can be as follows :

- (i) Translate this passage in your mother-tongue.
- (ii) Describe the main incidents of the story.
- (iii) Explain these passage.
- (iv) Fill in the gaps :
- (v) What inference do you draw from the play ?

(5) Black-board Work

It contains the following :

- (i) Marginal entries,
- (ii) Words of pronunciation drill, and
- (iii) Table of exposition work.

Black-board can be used for removing reading difficulties, writing the comprehension and recapitulatory questions and their answers. Assignment can also be written on the black-board.

(6) Assignment

Students should be given some assignments. The assignment can be as follows :

- (i) To remember the meaning and spelling of new words.
- (ii) To use these words in sentences.
- (iii) To fill in the gaps.
- (iv) To translate the passage into mother-tongue.
- (v) To write the gist.
- (vi) To explain words, phrases and idioms.

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