

Cry, The Beloved Country

1995 Edition

Guided Imagery: Teacher Instructions



PURPOSE:

This guided imagery practice helps students generate writing that contains more description, especially sensory description. It also has been known to help students approach a story with a more creative mode where they are better able to visualize images, and develop ideas. Samples in 1977 stated that the guided imagery technique can help 1) build a structural base for inquiry, discussion, and group work, 2) explore and stretch students' concepts, and 3) encourage problem solving.

Directions:

Step 1:

Begin the exercise by asking the students to stretch, regulate and slow their breathing, and relax. Have them clear off their desks, and get into a comfortable position to listen to the reading. This reading is in preparation for them to free write about their final paper. Tell them that they will be free writing about poverty after the reading and that free write will be used in their final persuasive paper about what effect poverty has on moral values.

Step 2: Reading

Read the passage slowly to give the students time to visualize it. Pause after reading each of the questions at the end of the passage to give students time to conjure up the image, the smells, or the emotion asked for. You can even count to thirty to make sure to provide the students with enough time.

Read these two passages:

“Number six thousand on the list. That means I shall never get a house, and I cannot stay where I am much longer. We have quarreled about the stove, we have quarreled about the children, and I do not like the way the man looks at me. There is the open ground by the railway line, but what of the rain and the winter? They say we must go there, all go together, fourteen days from today. They say we must get together the planks and the sacks and the tins and the poles, and all move together. They say we must all pay a shilling a week to the committee, and they will move all our rubbish and put up lavatories for us, so that there is no sickness. But what of the rain and the winter?” p. 86

“This night they are busy in Orlando. At one house after another the lights are burning. I shall carry the iron, and you my wife the child, and you my son two poles, and you small one, bring as many sacks as you are able, down to the land by the railway lines. Many people are moving there, you can hear the sound of digging and hammering already. It is good that the night is warm, and there is no rain. Thank you,

Mr. Dubula, we are satisfied with this piece of ground. Thank you, Mr. Dubula, here is our shilling for the Committee.

Shanty Town is up overnight. What a surprise for the people when they wake in the morning. Smoke comes up through the sacks, and one or two have a chimney already. There was a nice chimney-pipe lying there at the Kliptown Police Station, but I was not such a fool as to take it.

Shanty Town is up overnight. And the newspapers are full of us. Great big words and pictures. See that is my husband, standing by the house. Alas, I was too late for the picture. Squatters, they call us. We are the squatters. This great village of sack and plank and iron, with no rent to pay, only a shilling to the Committee.” p. 88

Once you have finished reading have the students keep their eyes closed as you ask them the following questions about the passage. Ask them to visualize these things in as much detail as they can.

- How did you visualize the narrator of the story? What did he/she look like?
- What are the feelings you get when you visualize shanty town and the houses that the people lived in?
- How did you visualize the homes? What is the average size of the homes? What are the walls made of? The frame? The roof?
- How would residents of shanty town dress? Where would they work?
- What is surrounding Shanty Town?
- What would some of the specific smells be around shanty town?
- Imagine that you and your family were somehow evicted from your home and you had no other family close by to stay with, where would you go? How would you feel?

Step 3: Writing

Once you have finished, have the students open their eyes. Have them write down as many descriptive details about the scene as they can remember. Let them write for several minutes or as long as they need. These descriptive details can be included in their final persuasive paper. The visual images they conjure up through their writing can help persuade the audience of their paper of the potent effect of poverty on the lives of the poor.

Assessment:

Have the students hand in their free writes with their final paper. In order to ensure participation you can require that the students use at least one sentence or three adjectives from their free write in their final persuasive paper about how poverty affects moral values.

