

Developing the Strategies or Techniques for Teaching Fiction (Novel)

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Abstract

In general sense, we can define novel as “a long fictitious narrative story” but the conventional definition of novel says “it is a kind of work of fiction which has no less than fifty thousand words in prose”. As novel is a long fictitious narrative story, it requires a great sense of humour and powerful teaching skills from the side of teacher who teaches it”. Moreover teaching fiction is a long time process because one cannot teach it in a single day. Therefore it requires a great amount of work from the teacher’s side. Now let us discuss how one can teach novel in classroom.

For teaching fiction or novel in classroom, the very first thing which is necessary for any teacher is that teacher should not teach novel through lecture but he should prepare different activities or tasks based upon the novel e.g. he should prepare pre-task, while-task and post-task. Even there are many other different strategies and techniques that teacher must use in classroom while teaching novel. Now let us try to understand what are those strategies or techniques.

Strategies or Techniques of teaching fiction:- Before we discuss the strategies or techniques of teaching fiction, it is necessary to understand **what is the difference between techniques or strategies and activities** because learners always remains in dilemma regarding both the things. These things always confuse learners too much. Mainly an activity is **a thing which a teacher uses in the classroom for teaching content** while technique is **a thing which teacher implements for teaching activities in to classroom**. So, we can say that teaching activity is a part of technique or strategy. Now let us switchover to techniques or strategies that a teacher should use in classroom. But, while preparing any activity or before implementing any technique teacher should keep in mind the level of the learners.

Strategies or Techniques of teaching fiction:-

1. 0 Using beginning and for guessing work: - This is a technique which a teacher can use to make the classroom interactive. Here, teacher can tell the beginning of any part of the novel and after that he can ask the students to guess what will happen next. It means teacher can ask students to guess what do you think what will happen next or happened earlier in the novel. The advantage of this technique of fiction teaching is that this will make the learning interesting and converts the teacher cantered class into student cantered class. It provides

the calm teacher oriented class lively atmosphere by generating much more interaction. By this technique the cognitive skill of students will also get improved.

1.1 Introducing novel through different media: - This is a kind of strategy where teacher does not introduce novel directly to students but he takes help of any other literary piece which has similar kind of name. In this strategy a teacher asks students to make comparison between two literary tasks i.e. a teacher may asks to compare a novel with a poem or any literary item which has same theme like that particular novel which has to be studied. Here teacher has to use pre-knowledge of the students. By this techniques teacher can develop critical skills in students.

1.2 Using information gap activities: - In this technique, a teacher has to prepare cloze based activity. A teacher uses certain proverbs or scenes. That may be familiar with the students to preparing cloze. For example in an Indian English novel, there might be certain proverbs or scenes.

A teacher should highlight these points to create i -gap (information gap filler) activity. Moreover teacher can use framing certain dialogues and he can create agreement/disagreement activities. Through this strategies teacher can make hard novel easier. By this he can bridge the gap of students needs.

1.3 Using translation activities:-

This technique can be very helpful to teach novel if the novel contains some hard words, proverbs, idioms, or cultural items. To teach all these hard things into easy way or to convert these hard things into easy things teacher can prepare translation activities or translation tasks. In this kind of translation tasks teacher should ask students to translate those hard things into their mother tongue and even teacher should help them out with some help in vocabulary and in the comprehension of language too. By doing this, a teacher can make learners familiar with the settings or the background of the novel. But before using this technique in class room teacher must check the level of the students because with the beginners or at intermediate level this technique may prove fruitless. Students who are not very much competent in language may not be able to translate the proverbs or cultural items into their mother tongue. So, teacher should keep in mind that this technique can be proved very fruitful with advance level students but not with beginners or intermediate level students.

1.4 Showing relationship within the text: - This type of technique can be done through comparing cohesive devices and relationship between character (family charts). Here teacher can give activities like what impression do you associate with each place; what kind of class (social) do you find in the novel then compare them with each-other. *Teacher may use complete or movement with the same space for comparison activity.*

1.5 Building up a labelled map of journeys in the story: - Teacher may use this technique to teach the journey of the novel or characters. By doing this activity with the students in the real classroom teacher can bring students

unconsciously near to the characters life, their work, their relations with the other co-characters of the novel. Thus, it helps learners or students to be more familiar with the characters of the novel and also with the thematical aspects of the novel. Thus, novel teaching becomes very easy for the teaching.

1.6 Building up time chart of the action: - It means teacher make them know when the actions occurred in the novel and then according to the time period teacher can also present those actions into the forms of charts. Thus, through the study of charts too, student can come to know the thematical aspects of the novel and as a result of it they become enough familiar with the text. Then teacher can ask students to prepare such tasks of the particular novel and when students do this they have to read the novel and thus the purpose of teaching novel can be achieved.

1.7 Building up research resources: - This is one of the best strategies of teaching novel where teacher forces the students to read the critical articles of the particular novel. It means teacher without making the students know forces them to read thing written on any particular novel and by doing this makes them familiar with the plot of the novel. Then teacher can ask the students to put the views of critiques on the notice board of class room so that others can also read and can increase their knowledge of novel.

1.8 Building up a strip cartoon of the novelistic action:- Building up a strip cartoon of the novelistic action means teacher asks student to draw a cartoon over the actions and the things introduced to the novel. e.g If there is a hotel or river in the novel then teacher can ask them to draw what kind of hotel or river is mentioned in the novel according to their points of view. Thus, when they are asked to draw a cartoon over novel teacher unconsciously forces them to read novel. And by doing this students learn the novel with ease. Thus, this is a good technique.

1.9 Role play - This technique is a role play activity where teacher asks students to perform the role of the characters of novel. By doing this they will be more familiar with the characters of the novel. But one thing is necessary for teacher to keep in mind that before giving this kind of tasks to students it becomes necessary for the teacher to check that students are familiar with the basic outline of the story. This role play activity can be very handy in bringing students near to the character and thereby to novel too.

1. 10 Writing a letter to the novelist or the publisher: - Here, in this technique teacher asks the students to write a letter to the novelist or publisher. This technique of teaching novel is not very common among teachers because it requires long time, and modern technology. This technique can be very fruitful but only in the big cities where modern technology like internet is available to get instant feedback from the novelist. Even there is no surety to get the feedback from the publisher or the novelist.

1. 11 Recitation: - Here teacher should ask students to read aloud the passages of the novel by assuming the role of the characters. By doing this activity a student may assume the role of the characters and s/he may try to pretend like the characters. Thus, through recitation too, teacher can bring the students close to the characters of novel and thereby novel too. Aloud to recite dialogue would also make the class live and it would also help them to know new words which increase their repertoire.

1.12 Asking students to write to an advertisement: - This technique will help teacher to develop critical skill in students since the students have to think about which point to highlight and how to design an advertisement. The vital motive behind this technique is to bring out the hidden critics from the students and the second motive is also that through this activity teacher forces them to work upon the text of the novel. Thus, as a result of their deep concentrated work they design an advertisement and come to know the theme of the novel.

1.13 Theme poems of parts of books: - Here teacher should ask students to choose five to six central sentences from the novel and then ask them to create poem upon those five-six sentences. Then also ask them to interpret the created poem. This activity will not only improve their creativity but also make them near to the theme of the novel.

1.14 Using multimedia: - This is the best thing what teacher can do. Visualisation creates great impact upon the mindset of the students. It provides such impact regarding the text which stays in mind for very long time. If possible then teacher should show students the film based on the novel. Thus, students can improve their critical aspects too.

1.15 Using soap-opera: - This technique is not well used by the teachers but it can serve the purpose of teaching novel. Here in this technique teacher has to ask students to think of any television serial) actor or actress for the character of the novel. E.g. If the teacher has to teach the novel *"The old man and the Sea"*, then teacher should ask the students that which television (serial) character is suitable for the character of Santiago.

1. 16 Literal Thinking: - This technique is very same to the technique of soap-opera. Here too, students have to think any particular character for the novel's character. But the only difference is that in soap-opera students have to think about any television character as the character of the novel but in the technique of Literal Thinking students have to think widely and have to choose any actor or actress from Hollywood or Bollywood. E.g. Amittab Bachhan as Santagio.

1.17 Mimes and tableaux: - Here teacher should come out with certain portion of the novel and then he should prepare and enact a mime upon that portion of the novel. If teacher does this then teacher can unconsciously develop the predicting or guessing power of the students.

Conclusion:-

The upper described all the techniques can be very helpful and can be very effective. If teacher is well equipped with the modern technology then he must use them to teach novel. One more thing that teacher should keep in mind that these all techniques can serve their purpose but only when they are used properly. Teacher should also keep in mind the level of the students.

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