

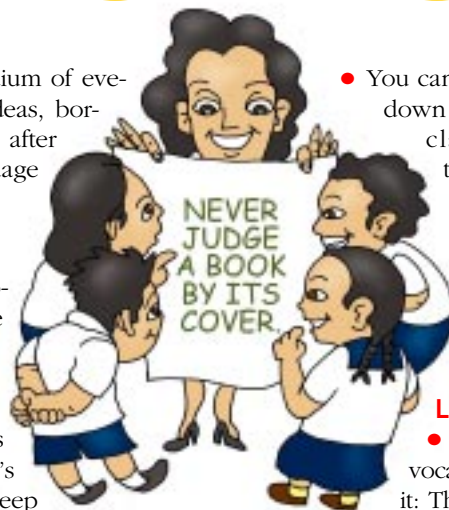
WE LOVE Language!

BY NENI STA. ROMANA-CRUZ

Children love surprises to break the tedium of everyday school life. Here are favorite ideas, borrowed from here and there, modified after initial experiments to make the learning of language skills more memorable.

Quick tricks

- To begin a class session and as a way of keeping the students engaged as all of them settle down, post a large-size sign with a quotation, short saying or a riddle. Make sure it's visible to everyone so that they can't help but read it. A group of students can take turns reading the signs and you talk as a class about what it means. If it's a riddle, have your students guess the answer. Keep the signs for future use. Before long, you'll have a collection for the next school year.

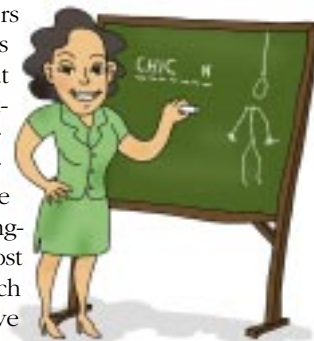


- You can also begin the class by writing down a new word on the board. The class can guess its meaning through by asking you questions that can be answered only by "Yes" or "No." Track the number of questions they ask before they can guess the word and see if they improve as you do this exercise.

Longer activities

- Play "Hangman" to teach new vocabulary words. Here's how to play it: Think of a word that the students have to guess. Draw dashes on the

board to indicate the number of letters the "mystery word" has. Your students take turns guessing the letters that would complete the word. If the letter is a correct guess, write the letter on the dash/es where the letter should be. If the letter isn't part of the mystery word, begin to draw the "Hangman" figure, beginning with the post on which he is to be hanged, then each part of the body for every successive wrong guess.



- After reading a book, assign a pair of students to act out an interview based on what they've read. To make it more fun, they can bring costumes and props and pretend to be in a TV show. The pair must prepare the script in advance and decide who the "celebrity interviewee" will be. It could be the one of the characters of the book or the author. You can use this exercise for other classes: other possible interviewees are an inventor (for a science class) or a national hero (for Makabayan), etc. You can also assign them a particular topic to discuss.

- Stumped for writing exercise ideas? Why not try advertisements or slogans for a product; a letter to the government to discuss a community problem; a comic strip with a short dialogue; diary entries; news reports with catchy headlines; how-to instructions for a process that students want to share.

MAKE A BOOK QUILT!

This makes an attractive and meaningful classroom wall hanging. It also allows all your students to take part in decorating their own classroom.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1 Give every child a square piece of cloth or paper. Make it large enough to draw on, but not so large that your quilt won't fit your wall once you've put it together.
- 2 Have every child design their square strip based on a favorite book. The square should also carry the title of the book, the student's name, date, and a scene from the story with a brief description (at least one line).
- 3 Put your quilt together by gluing or sewing the squares together to form a larger square or rectangle. You can then hang this on the wall to decorate your classroom.

TIPS:

- To reduce anxiety about making mistakes, have your students practice their drawings on scratch paper.
- To make the quilt more attractive, you can cut out strips of paper or cloth in a contrasting color and use these in between squares to "frame" each drawing.



ABOUT THE WRITER:

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