

Using Digital Mind Mirror Projects for Teaching Reading to Young Learners

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Abstract. *The article deals with using digital mind mirror projects for teaching reading at the English lessons. The author describes the stages of teaching reading to young learners, reveals the elements of a mind mirror project and proves the effectiveness of using it at a post-reading stage. The article suggests software for creating digital mind mirrors and describes the fragment of the English lesson at primary school illustrating the creation of digital mind mirrors.*

Keywords: *mind mirror projects, English lessons, teaching reading, digital tools.*

Reading is one of the basic language skills that students should acquire while studying at primary school. It is a receptive language activity aimed at acquiring new information out of the text. There are different types of reading: skimming reading, scanning reading, close (research) reading [1, p. 50-51], extensive (synthetic) reading, silent reading, reading aloud, intensive reading, etc. [2, p. 158-159].

The process of teaching reading to young learners can be performed in three stages: pre-reading stage, during-reading (while-reading) stage and post-reading stage. Each stage includes different types of techniques and exercises (pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading activities). Pre-reading stage can include such exercises as predicting what the text will be about, discussing the titles and pictures from the text, reviewing vocabulary, etc. During-reading activities imply checking the predictions, predicting what will come next, drawing a picture of a scene, correcting a text with errors, filling in a graphic organizer, etc. At the final post-reading stage the students put a set of illustrations to the story, talk about likes and dislikes, describe a character or a scene, create a mini-book, write a new ending, etc. [3, p. 178-185].

One of the interesting activities for teaching reading is making mind mirror projects. A mind mirror project is an educational teaching tool which is aimed at helping students to analyze characters of the written story using the following elements:

- two quotes;
- two original statements;
- two images;
- two symbols [4, p. 10].

Such projects can be used mostly at a post-reading stage as they imply students' analysis of the heroes, judging about their traits of character, comparing heroes of the story and making a creative presentation of their research. The students can work in groups, in pairs or individually and create a collage either on paper or in an electronic

form. For making a digital mind mirror students can use various graphic editors (Paint, Adobe Photoshop, etc.), text editors (Microsoft Word, Google Docs, etc.), tools for making presentations (Microsoft Power Point, Canva, Google Slides, etc.). Let us show the fragment of the lesson in primary school (4th grade) illustrating the creation of a digital mind mirror. Before making mind mirror projects students read the fairy-tale Rumpelstiltskin [5]. The procedure of the lesson fragment is presented below.

1. The teacher displays mind mirrors of two famous characters from fairy-tales created in Microsoft Power Point (see Fig. 1), and the students have to guess the characters judging from the mind mirrors.



Fig. 1. Mind mirrors of Snow Queen (on the left) and Cinderella (on the right)

After that, the teacher explains the details of working with the tool Google Slides for making mind mirrors: inserting shapes, lines, images, text, video, etc.

2. The teacher demonstrates the sample of a mind mirror worksheet created in Google Docs for preparing the mind mirror of Cinderella (see Fig. 2). The aim of such worksheets is to collect materials (images, quotations, links, etc.) for making a character mind mirror on the computer.

Cinderella (sample)					
Pictures	Symbols	Quotations about the character from the story	Things you say about the character	Things that the character says in the story	Music or/and video (optional)
 	 	- Just a dirty maid in the kitchen. - I will find you, my beautiful princess.	- She is beautiful and modest. - She is kind and hardworking.	- My dress and shoes are dirty and poor! - Yes, my Prince, I will marry you.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hjv8kdNNrYI https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2Q_107thJI

Fig. 2. A mind mirror worksheet created in Google Docs

3. The students are divided into groups and fill in the mind mirror worksheets about the characters of the fairy-tale “Rumpelstiltskin” (the king, the miller’s daughter and Rumpelstiltskin) according to the task given to each of the group. Members of the groups have different tasks: one person suggests and adds pictures and symbols, another one is responsible for finding quotations, etc.

4. The students create their own mind mirrors copying and pasting materials (pictures, quotations, video, etc.) from the mind mirror worksheets to the presentation in Google Slides, add animation, save final projects in pptx and jpg formats if necessary and share them with other groups.

5. The students present their mind mirror projects in groups (see Figures 3,4) and discuss them with the teacher and other students.



Fig. 3. A mind mirror of Rumpelstiltskin created in Google Slides



Fig. 4. A mind mirror of the King created in Google Slides

The students can also upload their mind mirrors to social networks (TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, etc.) or blogs.

Thus, a mind mirror project is an interesting post-reading activity that leaves a lot of space for students' thinking, experimenting and imagination. Such activities can help teachers not only in teaching foreign languages but also in developing students' multiple intelligences, critical thinking, creativity, the ability to work in a team as well as cognitive, communicative, digital and other 21st century skills.

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