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INDEPENDENT CLOZE ACTIVITIES FOR INCREASING SIGHT VOCABULARY

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Generally, the term cloze, derived from closure, is a term Gestalt psychology has applied to the human tendency to complete a familiar but not-quite-finished pattern. An easy example to cite is for one to observe this pattern (figure at right), and then perceiving it as a circle from the given parts.



Presently, educators have accepted the cloze procedure as a method of systematically deleting words from a prose selection and evaluating the responses given by the reader as he supplies the words deleted. A cloze response is therefore a response produced by the reader in place of the deleted word.

Research on the cloze procedure falls under three broad categories: 1) readability, 2) as a measure of comprehension, 3) modified as a teaching device (Jongsma, 71). The first two categories implement the procedure in a structured form (Riley, 1973). The third area has been concerned with using or modifying the cloze procedure as a teaching device. For example, Greathouse and Neal (1976) conducted a study that modified the cloze procedure into letter cloze and reported it to be an effective tool for teaching contractions. Letter cloze, then was a modification in which one or more letters were deleted from the contraction to be learned.

This article is concerned with modifying the cloze procedure into letter cloze independent activities to aid children in learning difficult sight words. Teachers use a variety of methods in aiding children to retain sight words in their long-term memory banks. Some of these methods range from the traditional flash cards to the modern "game" concept. Unfortunately, there are some children who still are not able to learn nor retain sight words over a given period of time. Modified letter cloze is another method to use with children who continue to have difficulty learning and retaining sight words. The independent activity might resemble the following:

from
rom
fro
fr m
f om
from

1. Billy walked _____ his house to school.
2. Billy and Tommy were _____ the same town.
3. Without looking at the word, write your own sentence.

From
rom
Fro
Fr_m
F_om
From

1. _____ his house Billy walked to school.
2. _____ the same town were Billy and Tommy.
3. Without looking at the word, write a sentence that begins with the word.

| | |
|---------|---------|
| through | throug_ |
| th_ough | thr_ugh |
| thro_gh | _hrough |
| t_rough | through |

1. They could see us _____ the window.
2. I could see many pretty fish _____ the water.
3. Without looking, try to write the word by yourself.
If you miss, try again.

| | |
|---------|---------|
| Through | Throug_ |
| Th_ough | Thr_ugh |
| Thro_gh | _hrough |
| T_rough | Through |

1. _____ the window they could see us.
2. _____ the water I could see many pretty fish.
3. Without looking, use this word in one of your own sentences.

Construct of Independent Cloze Activities

1. 5" X 8" cards. Use back and front.
2. Type the word as a whole on each side of card. (use lower case letters on one side; use the capital for the first letter and small letters for the rest of the word.)
3. Randomly delete each letter, until all the letters have been omitted once.
4. Type the word as a whole.
5. Use the word in several independent contextual situations.
6. Laminate the cards and place in a center for independent work.

In summation, the above type of activity for aiding children to retain difficult sight words has proved effective. During the past two years graduate students participating in the reading practicum at Southeastern Louisiana University have reported on an average of 15 or more difficult words being retained by

a child during a four week interval of remediation. While in the practicum, the children worked independently with their letter cloze activities, were able to learn the difficult sight words, allowing the graduate students to work on other areas of the children's learning needs.

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