Scaffolding Images and Text with Mini-Cards (Secondary)

theory behind scaffold...

We all know by now (pretend that you do, even if you don't!!!) that teaching critical thinking is a never-ending job. Critical thinking strategies are domain sensitive, which simply means that a strategy that works in art may not work in history, and a strategy that works debating an issue may not work in figuring out how to outmaneuver an opponent in lacrosse.

Critical thinking strategies are also intricately tied to culture. The following is a fascinating study of students that elucidates this connection:

- A group of Chinese students along with a group of North American students were given an exam with problems to resolve based on a version of Hansel and Gretel most familiar to North American children.
- Seventy-five percent of the American students were successful in reaching a solution to the problems, while only 20% of the Chinese students presented appropriate conclusions.
- The two groups were then given an exam with problems based on a version of the same folk tale most often presented in China. In this case, the percentage of students from each culture who reached successful solutions was diametrically reversed.
- The conclusion reached in the study, was that the polarity in scores resulted from the students' ability to more rapidly process the details of the versions of the story they were most familiar with - the objects referred to, the reactions to circumstances in the plot, the dialogue of the characters, the subtleties of responses, etc.*

The studies expound on the subject, concluding that critical thinking strategies can become embedded in our consciousness the more we are exposed to them. In other words, the more opportunities we give our students to use them, the more successful they become in viewing situations from many angles and on many levels.

So what can we do? Well, instead following our first instinct and throwing up our hands, thinking that the task is so vast that we might as well not even begin, we instead take every opportunity to expand our practice. Whenever possible, broaden the variety of strategies we use in our classroom activities so that when our students go out into the world, they are more prepared - all because of the extra effort we put into our lessons.

We add to this repetition. As was illustrated in the scenario above with the Chinese and North American students, repetition of knowledge is essential in the likelihood of assimilating strategies more deeply. Successful problem-solving many times results from simply repeated exposure to varied strategies.

In this scaffold, students have the opportunity to develop their linguistic and visual skills as they negotiate connections between text and images. They also interact with the information through temporal and grammatical transformations, as well as bodily-kinesthetic interplay.

* (Willingham, 2007)

step by step...

1. Choose 10-15 short paragraphs (or sentence clusters) from the unit you're about to begin and place them into the template.

2. Choose an image that represents each of the sentence clusters - either from the textbook itself or from other sources - and place them in the template as well.

3. Make sets of these Mini-Cards for each pair of students. Cut them up separately, mix them up, and give a complete set to each pair of students.
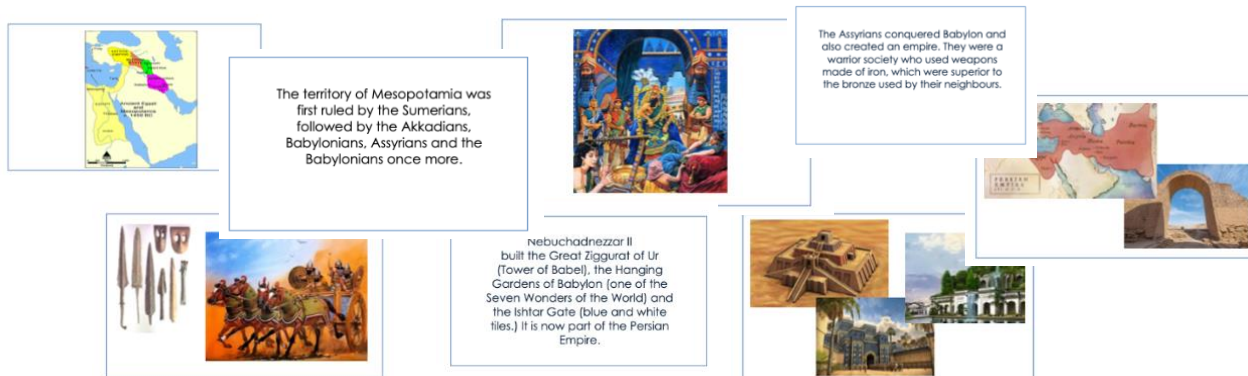
4. Students work together in the following way.

   a) Match the sentences with the image (remind them that there is no one *correct* answer, but only answers that they can justify).
   b) Read the sentence clusters aloud.
   c) Describe the images with as much detail as possible.

5. *Formative Evaluation/Reflection*: Students answer the following questions from the Question Continuum. (*Remember, some questions reflect content and others reflect methodology thus augmenting even further self-efficacy.*)

- Were the lands known as Sumer conquered many times by many different civilisations?
- Which texts did you find most challenging in matching the images?
- Who now occupies ancient Sumer?
- When did the Hanging Gardens of Baylon exist in what was eventually called Persia?
- Where was Sumer located on a global scale?
- What is the reason for different civilisations wanting to conquer other lands?
- How did you negotiate matching images and texts with your partner?
- Why is it important to know ancient history?

- What if you could live during one of the periods in the lands now known as Iran. Which time would you choose and what is so attractive about that civilisation, period in time, culture, etc.?

find more scaffolds here...
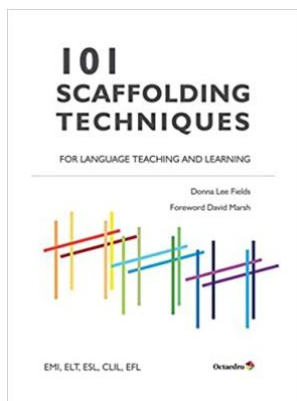
video explanation...

transcript of video explanation...

Hi! I'm Donna Fields and welcome to CLIL Scaffolding 1. This is a series of webinars designed to give you quick easy and adaptable scaffolding techniques. Scaffolding is simply transitioning into material more easily through activities and some easy techniques.

Today, I'm going to show you how to use Scaffolding Technique No. 20 that you can find in my book *101 Scaffolding Techniques for Language Teaching and Learning* that's also been translated into Spanish.

Today, the objective for this session, and it's always important to share objectives with our students. It helps them feel more empowered and involved, is to show how

easy it is to adapt scaffolding technique No. 20 to a primary and secondary classroom. Are we ready?

Scaffolding Technique No. 2, called 'Finding my other half', we use when students need to read some information that may seem easy at first, but it will help them to learn the vocabulary, the concepts and some of the images beforehand. This book, for instance, is from a lower secondary science class. Again, it may look so easy to you that you may not realise that the students might be a little anxious knowing the vocabulary, about understanding the concepts and about interpreting the images. So, what can we do? Very easy.

We take the images from the book and put them on different mini-cards. We take the sentences form the book and put them on other mini-cards. Easy so far, right? Now there are just four steps. You have them on different mini-cards with the images and the text - I usually do 8-10 at the same time - then you cut them up individually.

Once they're cut up, you mix them up and give each pair of students a whole set. The students work together to put the images and text back together. Once they're back together, they read them aloud. If there are some students who are ahead of others, you can ask them to change the structure of the sentences, use different tenses, anything to keep them using the language. That deepens the learning.

So, that was for a secondary classroom. Let's try for primary.

We're going to use the same technique for primary for Art. A lot of art teachers tell me that they're supposed to teach in English, but it's difficult to find things that are meaningful to the students. What's very meaningful is to help them with instructions in English. There's a lot of vocabulary that they can use in other places and we need them to understand what the instructions are, yes?!

So, these are images and instructions from a whole unit in an Art book. You put them on the mini-cards and then you cut them up just as before. Once they're cut up, we give a set to each pair of students and they work together to match the image and the instruction. When they have the images and instructions matched up, you can have them to read them aloud. It's important that they read aloud as often as possible so that the language goes deeper into their being.

So that's it for today. That was my scaffolding tip for you - Technique No. 20 - that you can find in my book *101 Scaffolding Techniques for Language Teaching and Learning* and please write to me at my Linked page or my Facebook page and tell me what you think of the webinar and what other ideas you'd like.

You can find me at these sites:

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