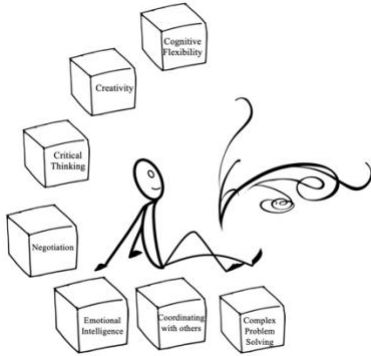


Scaffolding New Information by Considering the Ludicrous (Secondary)



theory behind the scaffold...

The use of textbooks is a controversial topic in education. Do they benefit or constrict our teaching? The studies show that they can do either, depending on how they are written and how we use them.

In the best-case scenarios, coursebooks reflect in-depth research on the most effective ways to present information, with accompanying teacher's books that offer varied ways to scaffold, expand, assess and reflect on the material. There are, however, those publications that reflect less meticulous care in both structure and detail, and these can be less than ideal.

If teachers use the publisher's books as the sole resource, the students have a good chance of progressing in their studies. On the other hand, if they depend on the Student Book without scaffolding the activities and texts, the information will often be received by the students as dry and almost indecipherable.

The ideal is to use coursebooks as a guide and not exclusive to all other possible sources and to be discerning and critical thinkers. We can augment the effectiveness of the books and add dynamic techniques that can infuse the exercises with more scaffolding, assessments, and attention to varied learning styles with little effort. This scaffold is one way to do just that - adding a bit of fun to the lesson by giving students ludicrous statements to consider and justify where they might find truth in them and also why they are also beyond the pale.

The example below comes from lesson on space. You'll see how you can quickly adapt the activity for whatever that you are about to begin.

step by step...




1. Choose a page or passage from the unit you are about to begin.



2. Divide up the text into chunks and place them into a table. (See [template](#).)
3. Identify an image from the text that encompasses an overview of the chunked information.
4. Write a statement that includes information from the chunked text and the image you've chosen and that is absurd (ludicrous).
5. Make one copy of the table for each pair of students.
6. Students work in pairs to write what about the statement could be true if they stretched their imagination and then why it is actually ludicrous. In both cases, they will be using the information from the text and academic language of the subject in general to express themselves. (See examples below.)



CONSIDERING THE LUDICROUS!!!

| TEXT DIVIDED INTO CHUNKS | Why the statements could be true. | Why the statements are ludicrous | LUDICROUS OR JUSTIFIABLE? |
|--|---|---|--|
| A spacesuit protects astronauts from heat and cold and gives them air to breathe. The helmet protects their eyes from the sun. | Space suits are supposed to protect the body. This suit protects the body. | Space suits protect the body in space. This suit would not protect a person in space. |  This is a space suit. |
| In the space station astronauts wear jeans or shorts and a T-shirt. They wear the same clothes for days because they can't wash their clothes in space!! | Most astronauts wear jeans or shorts and a t-shirt in space. Maybe some have a sense of humour and wear a pirate costume. | Astronauts wear jeans in space, not pirate costumes. |  This is what astronauts wear when they take off their space suits. |
| Astronauts live in space stations for more than a year. Space stations protect the astronauts from zero oxygen in space. | Space stations protect astronauts from zero oxygen in space. This protects people from zero oxygen in the ocean. | Space stations are in space. This is a submarine. A submarine is made for the water. It cannot fly. |  This is a space station. |

7. *Formative Assessment/Reflection:* Answer the questions from the Question Continuum.



- Do astronauts wear spacesuits?
- Which country has sent the most astronauts into space?
- Who is most likely to become an astronaut - a person with or without physical handicaps? Explain.
- When do astronauts wear spacesuits?
- Where do the most renown culinary artists work?
- What is the purpose of considering ludicrous statements?
- How does the space program choose the appropriate people to be astronauts? For each mission?
- Why do people want to become astronauts?
- What if you had the chance to attend a space camp for a summer instead of a trip to Disney World. Which would you choose and why?

find more scaffolds here...

