

An Eye for Details

Teacher Information

Background

Journalists must be accurate when reporting the news. Newsreaders want details that will create a picture of the actual event so that they might feel as if “they were there.” The Press Team that reports the events of a Challenger Mission will be painting a picture for parents, teachers and other students back at school. They must be able to remember the details clearly and be able to describe them vividly to ensure the accuracy of the reporting as well as to provide an interesting account of the event.

Materials

plastic tray (fast food size) or table
15 random objects (look at question sheet for examples/guide)
timer
pencils
paper

Procedure

1. Gather 15 random object. These objects must correspond to the questions on the student question sheet.
2. Arrange all 15 objects on the plastic tray or on the table.
3. Conceal all items until activity begins.
4. Instruct students to keep pencils on desks until activity begins.
5. Explain to students that they will have 1 minute to view the items, after which you will be asking them questions.
6. Set the timer for 1 minute and reveal items.
7. Re-conceal items after 1 minute is up.
8. Use the following to create 10 questions to ask the students about your specific items:
 - Name all 15 items.
 - What color was the coffee mug?
 - How many people were in the picture?
 - Was the tissue box open or closed?
 - What was the title of the book?
 - What was on the left of the coffee mug?
 - Which item was upside down?
 - Which item was green?
8. Complete the activity by revealing items and answering questions.

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Extensions

- Replace existing items then reduce time to 45 seconds.
- Plan an “event” to take place the day following this activity or later in the afternoon of the same day. The event should be a surprise and might be something similar to a visitor entering the room quickly, removing something from the teacher’s desk and exiting. Following the “event,” ask students to write a detailed description, including locations, physical descriptors etc...

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Student Sheet

Objective

To be able to describe a scene from memory.

Materials

Paper

Pencil

Timer

Covered tray of about 15 items provided by your teacher

Procedure

1. Your teacher will provide you with a covered tray of items. DO NOT REMOVE THE COVER YET.
2. One person in the group will be in the Timer.
3. All others in the group will be Observers.
4. Observers should sit down in front of the tray.
5. When all Observers are ready, the Timer will take the cover off of the tray for 1 minute.
6. During this time, Observers should carefully study the items on the tray. Observers should NOT write or draw or talk during this time.
7. After 1 minute, the Timer will put the cover back on the tray.
8. Immediately after the cover is put back over the tray, Observers should get a Question Sheet from your teacher and answer the questions according to what they remember on the tray.
9. After all Observers are finished answering the questions, the Timer should take the cover off of the tray so that Observers can check their answers.

Make Your Own!

Repeat the activity with a new person as the Timer. The new Timer should rearrange the items on the tray and make 3-5 questions to ask the Observers.

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Question Sheet

1. Name all 15 items.
2. What color was the coffee mug?
3. How many people were in the picture?
4. Was the tissue box open or closed?
5. What was the title of the book?
6. What was on the left of the coffee mug?
7. Which item was upside down?
8. Which item was green?