

Guided Imagery—to be used with *The Devil's Arithmetic*

By Jane Yolen; New York: Puffin Books, 1990

Use this strategy right before reading ch. 10, after ch. 13, or at the novel's finish

Disclaimer: The following exercise helps put students in the place of a Holocaust victim, much the same experience that Hannah goes through. This might be frightening for some students, so be aware of your class and use caution in this exercise.

Purpose of the Strategy: Geske (1992) finds that guided imagery is an exercise that allows student to enter a story in a creative mode wherein they are able to develop ideas and visualize images using both sides of their brain. Samples (1977) states that among other things, the guided imagery technique (1) builds a structural base for “inquiry, discussion, and group work,” (2) explores and stretches students’ concepts, and (3) encourages problem solving.

Directions

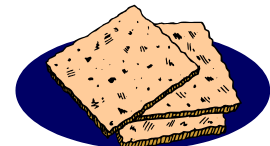
1. Begin by asking students to first stretch, inhale slowly, exhale, relax, find a comfortable position, and then close their eyes and listen. By speaking softly, take the students into the desired world that you want them to imagine. Soft music playing in the background, dimming the lights in the classroom, or burning a fragrant candle or some potpourri can be used to heighten the mood.
2. Read the indicated passage below slowly, giving students time to visualize each image. Count to 30 to pace yourself. The students ideally will listen with their eyes closed, but if they are uncomfortable with this, they may draw on a sheet of paper as they listen.
3. Ask students to open their eyes and write down what they experienced. Give them several minutes to write. Encourage them to go beyond what they experienced and keep writing until the allotted time is up. If you would like, repeat step 2 so students can relive the experience after writing about it. Students may share their response if they like or keep them completely private

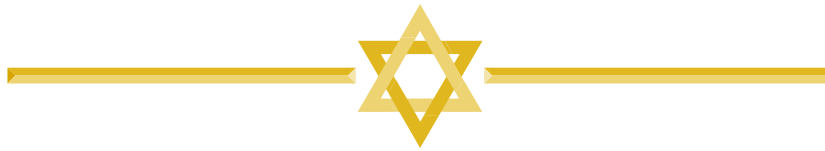
Assessment

To verify student participation in this exercise, have students show you that they completed the writing and check it off. Use this as encouragement of exploratory writing in the writing process so students can know what they feel about this subject before writing a paper to turn in.

The passage to be read

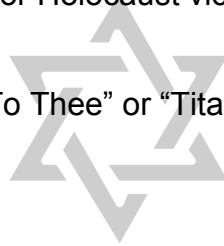
Close your eyes and tell all your muscles to relax. ...You are at a happy event surrounded by friends and family and having the time of your life...What do you see?...Who is among you?...What are you doing? ...Just when you thought things couldn't be any better, bad people enter the event...Who are they?...You feel confused, frightened, worried for your safety and the safety of your loved ones...These bad people force you all to lie on the ground...What does it feel like? ...Who is next to you? Can you





even tell who is next to you?...Then they rip of your jewelry and take all your possessions...You hear family members crying in pain...You cannot move...Are you cold? Are you uncomfortable? What are you feeling?...Then the bad people force you and your family and friends onto a bus... They cram you in, everyone standing, until you don't think any more people will fit...You can feel five...or is it six...people against your body, cutting you off from any escape...Scents of body odor and a small child's bathroom accident waft through the bus...You start to feel suffocated... There's no fresh air...It's very hot. Sweat is trickling down your entire body...What are you feeling inside?...Are you upset?... What are you thinking about?...The bus doesn't let you off for three days...You have had no water...You would give anything for a drink to quench the itchy dryness in your throat. You know the only thing keeping you standing are the five or six bodies pressed tightly against you....You finally get off the bus and are allowed a drink of water. ..What does it taste like? ...What's going to happen to you next. ...Now allow yourself to become removed from this environment...You are really in this classroom...extremely safe from any bad people...you are comfortable again...You realize that this experience is not real for you...Open your eyes and take a moment to reflect on the experience. It was real for Holocaust victims.

Music to be used: "Nearer My God To Thee" or "Titanic Suite" from the Titanic soundtrack



Bonnie Rood, Spring 2002, BYU

