

Directed Reading-Thinking Activity for *When I Was Puerto Rican* by Esmerelda Santiago

Purpose: This strategy will help students realize what they know about Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rican culture and language, and the issue of immigration. Through this strategy, students can use their own experiences to comprehend the message of the novel. This metacognitive strategy teaches students to acquire and activate their own purposes for reading. By setting their own purposes for reading, students develop their reading and thinking processes while the teacher, through his/her questioning techniques prescribes how the students will interact with the text.

Rationale: I will use this strategy at the beginning of the unit to introduce the novel. This will activate the students' schema before diving into the reading.

Directions:

PREDICTING

I will begin by showing the students the cover of the book (First Vintage Books Edition, August 1994). The cover shows a small girl in black and white and a landscape behind her in yellow and orange tones. I will then ask the students the following questions:

1. What significance do you think the title has?
2. What is the role that the girl will play in the novel?
3. What is the scene that is portrayed behind her? What is its significance?

After the students have answered these questions on their papers, I will put up an overhead of the table of contents (chapter titles):

I will ask the students to do the following:

1. Write a brief sequence of events in the novel as you see them unfold in the chapter titles.

READING

Instead of having a passage for the students to read and immediately verify the accuracy of their predictions, I will have the students start their reading and have them assess their own accuracy at the end of the novel as a post-reading strategy.

PROVING

At the end of the novel they can look at their previous predictions and go back through the text, finding textual evidences to the correct answers to the questions.

Assessment: I designed the questions to be quite open ended so I can see how deeply students interact with the text when I assess their verifications of their predictions. This strategy can also be assessed for reading comprehension through the corrections of their answers.

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Prologue: How to Eat a Guava
Jíbara
Fighting Naked
Someone is Coming to Take Your Lap
The American Invasion of Macun
Why Women Remain *Jamona*
Mami Gets a Job
El Mangle
Letters From New York
Casi Señorita
Dreams of a Better Life
Angels on the Ceiling
You Don't Want to Know
A Shot at It
Epilogue: One of These Days