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Introduction

In my thirty plus years as a teacher educator, I find that the great ideas for teaching stem from researchers studying teaching and learning, and from teachers who have persevered to find ways to reach more children in order to maximize learning in their classroom. Many of these creative and highly effective teaching ideas arise from teachers who are embedded in the most challenging situations, and, as such, are motivated to explore, find, or develop new strategies or materials to use with their students so as to have a greater impact on their learning.

Teachers who embrace these challenges of teaching and learning accumulate a substantial set of teaching tools and subsequently, are able to utilize *the appropriate tool for the moment at hand*. Dialogues are another teaching tool, a teaching strategy that will help teachers reach children in ways that other strategies might not. Dialogues involve students in speaking and listening, acting and reacting, tapping into emotional and kinesthetic parts of the brain. In short, *Dialogues* maximize students' engagement in the learning process; all students are involved as active participants when Dialogues are in play.

Dialogues have been tested from grades K - college. Credit for the germ of this idea and the initial spreading of the seed goes to Donald Cronkite of Hope College, who developed and used dialogues with his college biology students and shared this teaching strategy with high school teachers at a Woodrow Wilson Institute. A science teacher friend was one of those in attendance, who then grabbed on with both hands and began writing dialogues for his own students in biology classes. He also began to spread the word and captured the attention and interest of others including myself. I quickly connected other future and practicing teachers with the dialogues strategy and now the seed planted by Professor Cronkite has turned into a blooming field of dialogues.

The various dialogues within this book, and in *Dialogues for the English Classroom - Volume 2*, are classroom tested in both suburban and urban classrooms. You might decide to use them as is, or you might modify them and add your own spin or local context to them. You might also craft some from scratch, or have students write dialogues; we have included some suggestions and tips for writing dialogues. Also, consider submitting your (or your students') creations to us for publication in future *Dialogue* books.

Dialogues engage learners at high levels, so try them! Your students will enjoy the activity and learn something about the content you are trying to teach them, and learn something about themselves.

Editor - Dr. Craig Berg

English Dialogues - The Cast of Characters

Pip and Pep are two regular teenagers, living their daily lives and doing their business, often hanging together or studying together. They share the same classes at school and often find themselves talking about class or assignments.

Pip and Pep are also cast members in the school play and have landed the roles of Sheffield and Carruthers. In a couple dialogues, while discussing English assignments and concepts, Pip and Pep practice their characters by speaking and acting as if they were Sheffield and Carruthers. Sheffield is an older gentleman, wealthy and lord of the manor, somewhat stuffy and reliant on his man servant, Carruthers. Carruthers, having served Sheffield for decades is used to the grumpy, demanding, disposition of Sheffield and pokes back in a playful fun manner.

Chip and Dip are teenage siblings that often find themselves discussing assignments for their English class. Chip is a little more responsible than younger sibling Dip, which usually leads to Chip informing Dip in the standard use of the English language. Dip is not as knowledgeable, nor interested in proper use of the English language as Chip, and would prefer to watch TV; however, Dip sometimes surprises Chip with a lesson or two, despite Dip's more wild personality.

Hip and Hop are two teenagers who decided to go on a cruise ship to Central America where they hoped to enjoy a jungle excursion and a hike through the jungle. Hip stopped to take pictures and Hop became distracted by a marching line of leaf-cutter ants - soon they both got separated from the group and were left behind in the jungle. The cruise ship departed without realizing two people were missing. Hip and Hop found each other on the beach and watched the cruise ship sail away in the distance. Now, they must find their way back to civilization by hiking through the jungle and hopefully getting out in one piece.

Hip and Hop are quite different characters, which often leads to them being at odds with each other. Hip is a smart, scientific type of person, interested in bugs, plants and, of course, the Language Arts. Hop is not comfortable in the wild jungles of Costa Rica, and would much rather be relaxing next to the cruise ship's swimming pool reading a good book. Hop desperately wants to get out of the jungle, but Hip seems to think being lost is more fun than scary.

Section I - Dialogue Abstracts

Unit 1 - Grammar and Punctuation

1.1 Adjective - Pip walks into the classroom and sees Pep devouring a grilled cheese sandwich, smearing cheese all over Pip's desk. Pip attempts to clean up the mess and attempts to teach Pep about adjectives. Pep is being difficult to the point where Pip's head almost explodes.

1.2 Apostrophe - Pep is wearing a very nice hat that Pip recognizes as belonging to a friend. Pip's use of an apostrophe confuses Pep so Pip attempts to help Pep understand how and why to use an apostrophe.

1.3 Colon - Hip and Hop are packing their backpacks while cleaning up last night's campsite when Hip explains the finer points of using a colon to Hop.

1.4 Comma Used in a Series - Resting by a stream, Hip and Hop are commenting on the pluses and minuses of the jungle when Hip explains how to appropriately use a comma in a sentence that contains a series of items.

1.5 Comma With Introductory Phrase – Walking through the jungle, Hip and Hop notice a very oddly-shaped rock that turns out to be the entrance to a cave system. Thinking about going in, but worrying about what creatures may reside, Hip explains a second rule of using commas to Hop.

1.6 Comma and Conjunction – Hop is swimming in a jungle stream to cool off while Hip is on the shore making a fishing pole in an attempt to catch them some dinner. Hip begins a discussion that involves another rule of using commas in a sentence.

1.7 Exclamation Point - Pip and Pep have roles in the upcoming school play and are practicing their characters and voices of Sheffield and Carruthers, who are two elderly British gentlemen. Carruthers begins to get annoyed by the loud, almost shouting, voice of Sheffield, which prompts a discussion about use of the exclamation point.

1.8 Noun – Pip and Pep are sitting on a park bench, when they discuss the definition and finer points of a grammatical term, the noun. Pip helps Pep understand the difference between proper and common nouns.

1.9 Parenthesis – Once more, Pip and Pep are practicing for the upcoming school play, and morph into their characters, Sheffield and Carruthers. They forget their lines and extemporaneously converse about the subject they are studying in English class, which is use of parentheses in sentences.

1.10 Pronoun – Pep is frantic after having lost his/her fish Sir-Swims-A-Lot. Pip tries to calm Pep down with a discussion of grammatical terms and focuses on the what and how of pronouns.

1.11 Question Mark – Pep, perhaps on the brink of insanity, bravely tries to protect Pip from a fearsome monster that is trying to devour Pip’s sentences. Fortunately, Pip saves the day with punctuation knowledge.

1.12 Quotation Mark – Pep has been forced to get a part-time job, which he explains to Pip while trying to protect him from “flies” which in reality are quotation marks.

1.13 Semicolon - Hip and Hop are walking through the jungle, with Hop dragging his/her feet and moving very slowly. Even though they are very hungry, Hip is thinking about punctuation. As Hop tries to communicate his/her desire for food, Hip points out the importance and use of the semicolon.

1.14 Sentence and Period – Chip and Dip are camping in the local park. Having just watched a show on Bigfoot, Dip is now paranoid that Bigfoot is there in the park and they need to scam. Dip is frightened to the point where he/she is talking in one continuous stream of words. Chip unable to understand, communicates to Dip about the necessity of using periods in a sentence.

1.15 Verb – Pep finds Pip feeling a bit “under the weather” and tries to cheer Pip up. Pip uses the opportunity to teach Pep about regular and irregular verbs.

Unit 2 - Figurative Language

2.1 Alliteration - Pip and Pep are at an all-you-can-eat buffet when Pep wonders about “heaving the helping of ham,” which causes Pip to try to explain the concept of alliteration to Pep.

2.2 Alliteration (student written example) - In this dialogue, students Chris and Cole are having a conversation with their Coach, who is explaining alliteration to them.

2.3 Allusion - Still lost in the Jungle Hip is cooking breakfast consisting of toasted Costa Rican turkey-bird meat, while Hop is still asleep on the ground. Hip shakes Hop awake so they can eat and continue hiking out of the jungle. Hip calls Hop “Sleeping Beauty” which initiates a discussion around the concept of allusions.

2.4 Assonance – Pep walks into the classroom and hears Pip continually repeating a phrase that contains a repetition of vowel sounds that creates internal rhyming. Pip attempts to explain the concept of “assonance” with mixed results.

2.5 Consonance - Following their discussion on assonance, Pip and Pep strike up a conversation about consonance, in contrast to assonance. (Note – use after doing the assonance dialogue.)

2.6 Euphony and Cacophony - Pip and Pep are practicing their roles for the school play. As they discuss the finer points and differences of euphony and cacophony, they slip into the characters and voices of Carruthers and Sheffield and leave with a better understanding of this writers tool.

2.7 Hyperbole – Chip is working at the computer when Dip walks in eating a large sandwich with mustard spilling out and onto the carpet. Dip explains how hyperbole is a type of figurative language in which writers exaggerate to make descriptions more interesting.

2.8 Irony – Pep comes home after letting Pip baby-sit the pet goldfish, Sir Swims-A-Lot, and Pep makes a grim discovery. They trade barbs and in the process use irony, a figurative language concept that Pep is not familiar with.

2.9 Metaphor and Simile - Pep walks into Pips bedroom and finds Pip slithering on the floor and acting like a snake. This situation sets up a discussion about how similes and metaphors are used to illustrate a point.

2.10 Motif – Pep walks into the house and hears Pip repeating a famous phrase from Edgar Allen Poe’s poem, “The Raven.” Pip explains to Pep how motif has symbolic significance and creates theme or mood as well.

2.11 Onomatopoeia – Pep has had a terrible time at the after-school job. Pip tries to calm Pep down by helping with the homework and teaching Pep some grammar and onomatopoeia sounds.

2.12 Parallelism – Pep is tired from all of his/her responsibilities and complains to Pip, which initiates a discussion about using parallelism when writing or speaking to make a point. Pip points out that the authors of the Declaration of Independence, Martin Luther King Jr., and George W. Bush used parallelism to persuade, convince and get points across.

2.13 Personification - Chip and Dip are in the local city park, wading in the stream, when Chip uses personification to describe the situation. Dip gets annoyed when Chip begins to give non-human things, human qualities.

Unit 3 - Literary Terms

3.1 Dynamic Versus Static Characters - Hip and Hop are still fighting their way through the jungle. Hop looks exhausted and wants to rest, while Hip begins to wonder if Hop is a static or dynamic character in this jungle tale.

3.2 Fiction and Non-Fiction – Pip walks in on Pep who is having an imaginary war between pens and pencils. Pip is wondering about Pep’s grip on reality, which prompts a discussion about fiction versus non-fiction.

3.3 Flashback - Chip is sitting at a desk in his/her room, supposedly doing homework, but also listening to an mp3 player. Dip walks in and taps Chip on the shoulder hoping to borrow the mp3 player which reminds Chip of the last time Dip borrowed the mp3 player and the disaster that occurred.

3.4 Foreshadowing - Chip and Dip are walking down the sidewalk near their house when Chip notices Dip’s odd behavior, and begins to realize something is amiss. Chip explains how foreshadowing is an important literary tool for writers to give readers a sense of suspense and provide indications that something is about to occur.

3.5 Mood - Chip is putting decorations on tables, preparing for a Halloween party, when Dip comes into the room, obviously stressed out, and very worried that they haven’t created the proper mood for the “scary” Halloween part. Dip explains how authors create mood in stories.

3.6 Symbolism - Chip is laying on the bed doing homework when Dip enters and begins to pester and distract Chip. Dip wants to help Chip on the homework assignment, but doesn’t know what symbolism is, so Chip explains what symbolism is, how it is used, and how symbolism makes writing more interesting to the reader.

3.7 Tone - Chip is sitting on the living room couch, once again glued to the phone, when Dip enters and wants some attention. Not getting any Dip returns with a vacuum cleaner and a noise level that prevents Chip from talking, which sets up a confrontational discussion that highlights Chip and Dip’s underlying tone in their comments to each other.

3.8 Plot and Conflict – Dip is watching TV, when Chip calls to Dip for help undertaking an adventure. Dip resists helping, but Chip desperately uses this opportunity to discuss plot and conflict.

3.9 Dramatic Structure – Dip is sprawled out on the living room couch, coughing and blowing his/her nose. Chip enters the room, listens to Dip whine and begins to relate Dip's cold and behavior to dramatic structure.

3.10 Exposition and Inciting Incident – Dip is in the living room watching TV when Chip compares Dip's unchanging, zombie-like behavior to a Sci-Fi movie with a lack of dramatic structure.

3.11 Rising Action and Climax – While riding their bikes to the top of Freytag's Hill, Chip and Dip related the obstacles in their way to Rising Action and Climax in Dramatic Structure.

3.12 Falling Action and Resolution – Hip and Hop limp out of the jungle, onto the beach, and see a ship passing by. As they swim towards the ship, they discuss their adventure in the jungle in terms of falling action and resolution.

Unit 4 - Writing Terms

4.1 Audience – Pip and Pep are home trying to hook up a new video game system. Pip is in a tangle of cords and clearly frustrated, while Pep is using the manual to help and explaining how the manual is written for a particular audience of readers.

4.2 Objective Versus Subjective - Hip and Hop are running through the jungle, looking back over their shoulders every few seconds for the giant, jungle mouse chasing them, when they almost run off a cliff. Thinking about jumping into the river to escape their pursuer, they discuss objective versus subjective in terms of their surviving the jump.

4.3 Paraphrase - Hip and Hop are trapped in a large jungle tree, with several creatures that look like llamas circling below. Hip is checking the jungle manual and reading descriptions, trying to determine if the llamas are dangerous, when Hop suggests that given they are in a precarious situation, perhaps paraphrasing might be best, instead of reading the whole thing.

4.4 Point of View - Hip and Hop are climbing a mountain, attempting to get high enough to see which direction they should head to reach civilization. Hop is tired and begins to use 1st person narration. This initiates a discussion about writers using various points of view to convey a story and the differences and benefits of such.

4.5 Setting – Pip and Pep decide to use their imagination to change the setting of the school to something more interesting. They discuss various factors such as time and location which contribute to the key concept called setting.

4.6 Slang – Pep walks into the house acting like a teenager from the 1950's using words and phrases from that time period. Pip uses the opportunity to discuss slang and how slang changes over time.

4.7 Transitional Words – Pip is in the process of repairing a broken desk. Pip takes the opportunity to talk to Pep about transitional words and how it allows a writer to put things into chronological order, as well as help organize thoughts and writing, and in this instance gets Pep the tools in the proper order needed.

4.8 Voice - Hip and Hop are walking through the jungle, when they encounter a swamp. Thinking about crossing the swamp where jungle alligators reside, Hip pulls out a journal to write their story, so in case they are consumed by jungle alligators, someone might locate their journal and figure out what happened to them. As Hip writes and shares what is written, Hop wonders about the manner in which Hip is writing and listens to Hip describe how literary voice is an author's style of writing.