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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 I*, are classroom tested in both suburban and urban classrooms. You might decide to use them as is, or 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

Section I - Dialogue Abstracts

Unit 1 - Literary Analysis and Close Reading

1.1 Abusing Literature Aids - Pip and Pep meet each other outside of their school. Pip walks up to Pep who is sitting at a picnic table and begin to discuss the book *To Kill a Mockingbird* and how literature aids can be abused when attempting to understand the book.

Concepts: *To Kill a Mockingbird*, online literature sites, getting behind in reading, using literature aids.

1.2 Alliteration (student written example) - Chris and Cole are talking to their coach when they accidentally use alliteration and think they have just gotten into trouble by using inappropriate language. Their coach proceeds to explain alliteration.

Concepts: poetic devices, descriptive writing.

1.3 Allusions - Hop and Hip are hanging out in Hip's back yard, keeping an eye on Hagar, Hip's exceptionally curious and mischievous 5-year-old cousin.

Concepts: allusions, literary analysis, literary interpretation, symbolism.

1.4 Annotating Texts - Hip is eavesdropping outside his older sister Holly's room. Intrigued by what he is hearing, he wants to find out who she is talking to. Holly's speech is intermittent, as if she's talking on the phone with long pauses between replies. Hip squirms in anticipation.

Concepts: annotations, reading comprehension, imagery, symbolism, theme, style.

1.5 Hyperbole - Zig sits at a table in a school library. He is puzzling over a sheet of paper, when Zag comes racing in.

Concepts: hyperbole, poetic devices, exaggeration, descriptive writing.

1.6 Imagery - Pip and Pep are lying on a beautiful white sand beach. They are taking a break from work to relax for a little while.

Concepts: imagery, descriptive writing, elaboration.

1.7 Literal versus Figurative - Hip and Hop are walking to McDonald's after school. Hop is starving, and Hip is in one of his argumentative moods.

Concepts: figurative language, metaphorical language, figurative vs. literal language.

1.8 Motifs in Literature - Hop and Hip are listening to music in Hop's room. It's filled wall-to-wall with Green Bay Packer football memorabilia.

Concepts: motif, symbol, style, theme.

1.9 Multiple Interpretations - Pip and Pep are eating lunch after English class.

Concepts: literary analysis, metaphors, allegory, multiple meanings, supporting arguments.

1.10 Shakespeare Part I: Why Read Shakespeare? - Hop is sitting in his room, trying to slug through *Romeo and Juliet*, talking to himself.

Concepts: Shakespeare, literary analysis, allusions.

1.11 Shakespeare Part II: How to Read Shakespeare - Hop is back in his room the following day. Having met the ghost of Shakespeare, he is motivated to read *Romeo and Juliet*, but is struggling to understand what he's reading. He attempts to conjure the ghost of Shakespeare for help.

Concepts: Shakespeare, literary analysis, close reading.

1.12 Oxymoron and Paradox - Pip and Pep are getting ready to go out to dinner. They are arguing about where they should go.

Concepts: oxymoron, paradox, ironic phrases.

1.13 Prose - Pip and Pep are wandering around their local "mega bookstore." They are getting more and more frustrated.

Concepts: defining prose, genres of literature.

1.14 Reading Aloud - Pip and Pep are walking in the hall after leaving their English class. Pep looks stunned and Pip is totally embarrassed.

Concepts: reading aloud, class preparation, presentation skills, small group preparation, reading with feeling.

1.15 Structure as an Interpretive Clue - Hop and Hip are trying to do their homework at Hip's house but are being interrupted by loud chatter from a baby shower taking place in the next room.

Concepts: structure, form, literary interpretation.

Unit 2 - Punctuation and Grammar

2.1 Appositives and Appositive Phrases - Nick and Nora are bowling – another interesting date. It’s Nora’s turn, so she stands, bowling ball poised in front of her face, focusing on the lane in front of her.

Concepts: appositives, grammar, sentence variety.

2.2 The Ellipsis - Nick and Nora are browsing through racks in a retail store. Nick looks a bit confused, but Nora appears confident.

Concepts: punctuation, editing, proofreading.

2.3 Misplaced Modifiers - Nick and Nora are playing ping-pong. It is apparent that Nora can play very well. Nick is impressed. Nora aces Nick with a quickly efficient serve across the table.

Concepts: grammar, usage, adjectives, descriptive writing, clarity, editing.

2.4 Parentheses - Pip and Pep meet up at a coffee shop.

Concepts: sentence combining, sentence variety, use of parentheses, parenthetical statements.

2.5 Pronouns and Their Antecedents - Nick and Nora – out on their first date – are miniature-golfing. They are currently attempting the ubiquitous and dreaded “windmill” hole. Nick is standing near the hole, having successfully putted through the windmill. Nora is lining up her first shot through the windmill.

Concepts: grammar, usage, clarity, agreement.

2.6 Semi Colon: The Ultimate Weapon - It’s 6:00 a.m. on a crisp Saturday morning in October. Hip and Hop are waiting in line outside an electronics store for the highly-anticipated release of the video game, World Demolition IV.

Concepts: semi-colons, sentence combining, sentence variety.

2.7 Verb Tense Agreement - Zig and Zag sit on the floor in a corner of a desolate hallway. The door to a classroom is just to the right of them; an emergency exit is to the left. They appear confused.

Concepts: grammar, usage, verb agreement, clarity, editing.

2.8 The Way of the Dash - The scene is a costume party. Nick and Nora are strangers, but their costumes are similar, so they are eyeing each other tentatively. Nora is clad entirely in white – white shoes, white skirt, white t-shirt. Nick’s outfit is similar – white shoes, white pants, white t-shirt – except that in the middle of his shirt is a black horizontal line.

Concepts: punctuation, sentence variety, style, editing.

Unit 3 - Writing

3.1 Beyond the Five-Paragraph Essay - Hip and Hop meet at Hop's house to peer edit their poetry analysis essays. It's Hip's first time at his new friend's house.

Concept: essay structure.

3.2 Drafting and Editing - Two female English teachers, Ann and Claudia, are sitting on Ann's orange outdoor sectional with a beautiful view of a lake.

Concepts: rough drafts, editing, drafting, writing process.

3.3 Elaboration and Focus - Hop and Hip are in Home Economics class. They are pulling their unsuccessful creations out of the oven, putting them on the cooling rack.

Concepts: writing, the writing process, support, elaboration, focus.

3.4 Embedding Quotes - Hip and Hop are in the computer lab at school, working on their research papers. Hop, big grin on face, grabs his paper out of the printer and heads over to Hip.

Concepts: embedding quotes, using sources, supporting assertions, literary analysis, research papers, the writing process, plagiarism.

3.5 How to Read a Poem - Hop and Hip cruise through the park in search of Genius Bob, an eccentric musician and vagabond sage. As usual, he is singing and strumming his guitar. He stops as they approach.

Concepts: poetry, literary analysis.

3.6 Logical Fallacies: False Dilemma - The scene is late afternoon in a doughnut shop. Zag and Zig sit at a table after school with a box of doughnuts between them. Their backpacks are open and resting on seats beside them, and both have notebooks out on the table. Zig is staring at his, a look of intense concentration on his face. Zag, holding up a jelly doughnut, sighs reverently. Zig continues to think...

Concepts: logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument, false dichotomy.

3.7 Logical Fallacies: Argumentum ad Hominem - Zag and Zig sit in the bleachers of the high school gym. Zag is mesmerized by something he sees in front of them on the gym floor. Zig is also riveted, but by something on the screen of his laptop computer, which is open on his lap.

Concepts: logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument, personal attacks.

3.8 Logical Fallacies: Circular Reasoning - Zig and Zag are standing around in gym class. Zig practices lightly hitting a volleyball up in the air. Zag also has a volleyball; he is trying to balance it on top of his head.

Concepts: logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument.

3.9 Logical Fallacies: Hasty Generalization - Zig and Zag sit across from each other at a lunch table, a box of jelly doughnuts on the table between them. Zag is holding one up and staring at it. Zig is poring over a page in his notebook, clearly puzzled.

Concepts: logical fallacies, composition, rhetoric, argument.

3.10 Rhetorical Appeals - Pip and Pep are eating lunch on a bench outside of their school.

Concepts: ethos, pathos, logos, persuasion, credibility, speech, arguments.

3.11 Significant Closings - Two teachers are sitting at a restaurant after seeing a movie. They are having dessert and coffee.

Concepts: conclusions, big picture ideas, essay format, writing conclusions, the reader's perspective.

3.12 Subject versus Title of a Paper - Hop is in the library computer lab, head on the table in frustration. He drops his phone into his backpack and bangs the table with his fists.

Concepts: style, voice, writing an effective title.

3.13 The Thesis Statement - The scene is a high school hallway, lockers extending as far as you can see. Zag and Zig sit on the floor in front of what we assume are their lockers. Zig pores intently over a page of text; Zag, equally intent, searches a page of a children's book.

Concepts: composition, rhetoric, argument.

3.14 Using Sentence Variety - Pep walks up to Pip at a table in a common area of their high school. Pip is feverishly working on some homework and failing miserably.

Concepts: sentence variety, simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, editing.

3.15 The Writing Process: Time Management, Calendars, and Wood - Jimmy, a sophomore boy, comes into Ms. F's room. His tone is dejected. He's holding a beautifully-crafted wooden shelf.

Concepts: writing, the writing process, time management, organization.

Unit 4 - Research

4.1 Citing Sources - Zig and Zag sit at their local library. Both have their laptop computers open in front of them. Zag looks confused, but enthused.

Concepts: research, credibility, works cited, plagiarism, MLA format.

4.2 Effective Presentations - Pip and Pep are slowly being lulled into sleep by Mr. Green's presentation.

Concepts: PowerPoint, presentations, speaking, presenting.

4.3 Evaluating Credible Sources - Zig and Zag sit side by side at two computers. Both are focused intently on the screens in front of them.

Concepts: research, credibility, biased sources.

4.4 In-text Citations: What Goes in the Parentheses? - Zag and Zig – still working on a research project – sit at a table in the school cafeteria. Zig pores over a few stapled pages. Zag tosses three crumpled wads of paper in the air in front of him.

Concepts: research, MLA format, citations, punctuation.

4.5 Note Taking - A girl is sitting at a table in the school library working feverishly. She has a huge stack of cards next to her in various colors with lots of post-it style tabs on them. She is very stylish and preppy looking. She looks like a “popular girl.” A boy is sitting next to her with three cards in front of him. The cards look to be long on information and short on numbers. He has his head down on the table and he looks to be sleeping. He is dressed in all black and has a lot of piercings on his face. He is the typical “counter culture” type. A teacher is circling the room checking on student progress. She approaches the girl.

Concepts: note taking, being succinct, researching your topic, notecards.

4.6 Plagiarism - Pip and Pep are walking out of school at the end of the day. Pep is visibly angry.

Concepts: academic integrity, plagiarism, using your own ideas, giving credit, citations.

Unit 5 - Miscellaneous

5.1 Pip and Pep Discuss the Finer Points of Dialogues - Two high school teachers discuss the benefits of using dialogues in their english classes.

5.2 Pip and Pep Begin English: An Introduction to Dialogues - Pip and Pep are excited about their english class and discuss some of the positive things english class will do for them.