

# DURING-READING **SAMPLE LESSON**

## Mental Imagery Log

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Lesson adapted from: University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Meeting the needs of struggling readers: A resource for secondary English language arts teachers*. Austin, TX: Author; and based on research by McNeil, 1992; Wood & Harmon, 2001; and Gambrell & Bales, 1986.

### OBJECTIVE

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Students will create mental images as they read and describe their mental images with words or illustrations.

### MATERIALS

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- Overhead transparency of short passage.
- Overhead transparency of blank mental imagery log (see Figure 27).
- Several blank mental imagery logs (student copies).
- Several copies of a short passage or chapter.

### DAILY REVIEW

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**Teacher:**

Yesterday we began reading... Who or what was the story about? Good. Can anyone remember...?

### STATE OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE

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**Teacher:**

When I say the word *mental*, to what part of the body am I referring?

*Accept responses.*

That's right, the head—more specifically, the mind. Today I am going to teach you a strategy that will help you understand what you are reading. We are going to make pictures in our

minds called mental images. Forming mental images, or pictures, while you are reading will help you better understand and remember what you read.

## MODEL AND TEACH

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**Genre:** Narrative or expository (works best to introduce with narrative text)

**Grouping:** Whole class

### Introduce Mental Imagery

*First, review the five senses with students: touch, taste, smell, sight, hearing.*

*Then tell students to close their eyes. Circulate around the room.*

**Teacher:**

I want you to form a picture of a dog in your mind.

Think about how the dog in your mind looks, smells, feels, and sounds.

What color is your dog, Shelly? What kind of tail does your dog have, Jim? What does your dog smell like, Jose?...

*Continue the same steps with other familiar objects such as shoes, cars, a room, etc.*

*Then read a sentence to your students and ask them to make a picture of the sentence in their mind. Then ask students what words in the sentence help them build the mental image.*

**Teacher:**

Listen to this sentence. While I read it, make a picture of the sentence in your mind. “With a screech of its wheels, the bright red car sped around the corner.”

What word tells you that the car is moving quickly?

**Students:**

Sped.

**Teacher:**

That’s right, *sped*. So now our mental image is moving. We are making movies in our minds.

What do you see, Joe? What do you hear, Maria? Do you smell anything, Lisa? What kind of car do you see, James?...

### Model Mental Imagery

Model the process of completing a mental imagery log (see Figure 27).

1. Project a short passage on the overhead.
2. Read the passage to the class. Ask students to make movies in their minds as they listen and follow along.

3. Tell the students that you are going to teach them to write a description or draw a picture of their mental images after reading each paragraph.
4. Reread the passage one paragraph at a time, and ask students to listen to the words and form a mental image or make a movie in their minds. Allow students to close their eyes while you read.
5. After reading each paragraph, stop and “think aloud” as you complete the mental imagery log at the overhead projector.

**Teacher:**

While I was reading that paragraph, I saw the ship with its sails up, cargo in place, and pots of food still dangling over cold fires. But all of the people were gone. So, on my mental imagery log, I can write, “The ship looked occupied, but the people were gone.”

*Write the sentence on the mental imagery log transparency while you are saying it.*

Or I can draw a picture. The words that really help me make a picture in my mind are “pots full of food dangling over a cold fire.”

*Underline these words in the paragraph.*

This image really captures how the people seemed to have just disappeared. So I will draw a picture of a large pot with food, hanging over a fire that has gone out.

*Sketch the picture on the mental imagery log transparency.*

6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 for several paragraphs.

## GUIDED PRACTICE

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### Basic

**Grouping:** Partners or small groups

1. Give each group a blank mental imagery log and a brief passage or chapter.
2. Have students begin reading the passage or chapter with a partner.
3. Partners take turns reading one paragraph at a time.
4. After reading each paragraph, partners stop and share their mental images.
5. Partners help each other identify and underline any words that helped form their mental images.
6. Partners decide whether they are going to write a sentence describing their images or draw a picture. Then the students write a sentence or draw a picture in the appropriate space on the log.

During group practice, circulate around the room and listen. Remind students to make movies in their minds while they are reading.

## Variation

**Grouping:** Whole class

1. Give students five different colors of highlighters or map pencils.
2. Choose a short passage that is very descriptive in nature.
3. Give each student a copy of the passage and project your copy on an overhead.
4. Ask students to listen for descriptive words while you read the passage aloud.
5. Reread the passage together and highlight sensory words or phrases together. For example, highlight anything that describes sound with blue, smell with yellow, etc.

HELPFUL HABIT | Most students love to see their writing projected on the overhead. If a student writes an especially descriptive paragraph, make an overhead transparency and use his/her writing for this exercise. If a student has unreadable handwriting, type the paragraph for the transparency.

## INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

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**Grouping:** Individuals

For independent practice, students will be expected to complete a mental imagery log on their own. This will not be on the same day of teacher modeling and guided practice. Students will most likely need several opportunities for guided practice before they are ready for independent practice. They will then need several opportunities to practice independently. This is true with teaching any strategy or skill. Students must be given opportunities to practice often so that the strategy or skill becomes a habit. One way to conduct independent practice for this strategy is below:

1. Give each student a copy of a passage or chapter and a blank mental imagery log.
2. Read the first paragraph to the class while the students follow along. Before you read, remind the students to make movies in their minds as they follow along.
3. Ask students to write a sentence or draw a picture in the appropriate space on their logs.

HELPFUL HABIT | Reluctant readers are usually reluctant writers. Set a timer for an exact time, even if it is only 2 minutes, and ask students to write or draw continuously until the timer rings and then promptly stop. Gradually, increase the amount of time that students are asked to write continuously.

4. When students are finished writing, ask for a volunteer to share his/her response. Project the blank log on the overhead and fill in with students' shared responses. Ask students to share which words from the text helped them form their mental images.
5. Continue this process, one paragraph at a time, until the passage or chapter is complete. Depending on the level of the text, you might continue reading each paragraph to the class, or you might ask students to read one paragraph at a time silently.

## GENERALIZATION

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**Teacher:**

Can anyone think of where the mental imagery strategy might be useful outside of this class?

**Student:**

When we read stories in English class?

**Teacher:**

Definitely. What story are you reading in English class right now?

**Student:**

We're reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. We're reading the courtroom scene.

**Teacher:**

Oh, I love that book. So what should you be picturing in your mind as you read about the trial?

**Student:**

We should picture the courtroom with the judge and lawyers and all the townspeople watching the trial. We should also picture the jury.

**Teacher:**

That's exactly right. So when you go to English class today, pay attention as you are reading and make movies in your minds while you are reading. Tomorrow I am going to ask you whether making mental images helped you understand what you read in English class.

## MONITOR STUDENT LEARNING

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Check for appropriate responses on mental imagery logs.

## PERIODIC REVIEW/MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE

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Prepare by reading the text in advance and marking places conducive to creating a mental image. While reading with the class, stop at these places and ask students to make mental images. Ask questions about the images. Ask for words in the text that helped students form their images.

Periodically remind students to make movies in their mind while they read. Have students write descriptions or draw pictures of their mental images *and* give evidence from the text to support their images. Asking students to provide evidence is very important.

Periodically, or each day for a period of time, have students complete mental imagery logs in pairs or individually for paragraphs in assigned reading.

FIGURE 27. MENTAL IMAGERY LOG.

MENTAL IMAGERY LOG	
Title:	
Paragraph 1	Paragraph 5
Paragraph 2	Paragraph 6
Paragraph 3	Paragraph 7
Paragraph 4	Paragraph 8

*Adapted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Meeting the needs of struggling readers: A resource for secondary English language arts teachers. Austin, TX: Author; based on McNeil, J. D. (1992). Reading comprehension: New directions for classroom practice (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins; Wood, K. D., & Harmon, J. M. (2001). Strategies for integrating reading and writing in middle and high school classrooms. Westerville, OH: National Middle School Association; and Gambrell, L. B., & Bales, R. J. (1986). Mental imagery and the comprehension-monitoring of fourth- and fifth-grade poor readers. Reading Research Quarterly, 21, 454-464.*