

**Introducing LiD to Grade 4 to Grade 12 Students
Through A study of Ones' Topic Discourse
Utilizing I.E. Cognitive Tools
By Linda Holmes**

Language infiltrates all areas of humanity, so what better way to start each student exploring their Learning in Depth topic than having the student examine the discourse of their LiD topic.

“Change your language and you change your thoughts.”

- Karl Albrecht

Dis-course

Noun: Written or spoken communication or debate.

Verb: Speak or write authoritatively about a topic: “she discoursed on the history of Europe”.

Synonyms:

Noun... talk – speak – conversation – oration – address

Verb... talk – speak – converse

(Google Dictionary Definition)

For your enjoyment (or not) I have included my process in developing and delivering the Discourse Lessons. I personally have used variations of the lessons written below with students from age eight to fourteen.

Purpose: Students discover and collect language associated with their topic and open up new possibilities and directions in their topics for now and in the future.

“The limits of my language mean the limits of my world”

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Results: Rational for looking at “discourse”/Learning Objectives:

- Help students develop a deeper, more meaningful connection with their topic.
- Students create their own Glossary of Terms for their topic.

- Enhance language surrounding their topic
- Initiating contact with the history of the language of their topic

Following the lessons are some of the Imaginative Education, I.E.

Cognitive Tools I drew upon to create my lessons. The lesson order can be varies: however: I chose to start with my favorite book of all time, The Dictionary.

Exploring Discourse through COGNITIVE TOOLS

Discussion

Extremes of Reality:

For my first lesson on discourse I share that we will explore how language is a tool we can use to distinguish and define areas of study. Depending on the age group of my students, I determine how much “backfilling” I need to do, i.e. defining discourse, topics of study, my quest to get a masters degree, etc.

I start the discussion by introducing my topic of study, education. I read a line from one of my papers from university...

“Pedagogy requires a quantity of methodological expertise to foster the edification of scholars.”

Since my area of study is education, what I have just said may be irrelevant or useless to you. In other words you have no idea of what I was talking about. Areas of study create language that is topic specific and is sometimes called, jargon. For my topic, education, there is specific language that is used when writing educational papers. In the world of mathematics we use words specific to math, like equal, fraction, integers. These words may be used in other areas than math as well. For our sake lets go back to what I just said and decode it and put it into everyday

language, because that is just what I had to do when I started graduate studies. “Pedagogy requires a quantity of methodological expertise to foster the edification of scholars.” i.e. pedagogy means teaching, and methodological expertise means practical knowledge and edification means learning. So what I said in everyday language is... “Teaching requires some practical knowledge to help students learn.”

Why not say, “Teaching requires some practical knowledge to help students learn.” instead of all the JARGON? Jargon is the language / vocabulary peculiar to a particular trade, activity or area of study.

What specific language is there in your topic?

Activity

Collecting and Organizing:

Using a dictionary and thesaurus find out what is the definition and synonyms of your topic.

Record the definition in your portfolio / journal.

Define some of the more interesting words from your topic definition as well and record them.

Further Questions for cogitation (thinking about):

What is the purpose of having subject specific language?

How is subject specific language created? Where does it originate?

Where does language come from?

How does subject specific language relate, or not to general use language?

Further Lessons

NARRATIVE

Discussion

Heroic Qualities of Discourse: To self-command, understand, communicate and lead through wisdom.

“ Language is the armory of the human mind, and at once contains the trophies of its past and the weapons of its future conquests.”

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Heroic Image: Think about something mysterious – A PERSON HUNCHED OVER a box, book or object – a big, old, but LOCKED object - - SOMETHING IMPORTANT HANGS IN THE LURCH – access to a topic/idea – What’s the key?

Through curiosity one seeks knowledge that may lead to wisdom and power. Language is a key that unlocks the mysteries of the world around us and through ones knowing, knowledge is born, allowing one to participate more fully in the world. Through language one’s world expands.

Story:

What’s the story on your topic discourse – in real life?

What’s the story within the story – some situation where the discourse solves a riddle, or problem?

“Uttering a word is like striking a note on the keyboard of the imagination.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Activities

- Create a sentence using language specific to your topic.
- Begin a Glossary of Terms for your topic.

Exploring Human Strengths & Emotions:

More Questions:

What have you discovered about your topic?

What topic specific language have you come across in your research?

Has it enlightened or redirected your thinking?

What do you know now that you didn't know before?

LOOKING FORWARD AND CONCLUDING

Towards Further Understanding:

This is the beginning of creating and compiling a foundation for further research. It will also help students communicate their work when presenting their research.

A Celebratory Ending:

Students will be presenting their work to the class, of which their Glossary will be part.

Assessment:

Once students present there will be a short 'comments and question' period from the class.

"If we spoke a different language, we would perceive a somewhat different world."

"Change your thoughts, and you change your world."

"Imagination is the true magic carpet." - *Norman Vincent Peale*

"Wisdom is not a product of schooling but of the lifelong attempt to acquire it." - *Albert Einstein*

The Cognitive Tools – Romantic Understanding

Below are cognitive tools that could be used as focuses in several lessons. I have used only a few of the tools, however, for my more eager students I offered suggestions they could look into for their LiD topic from the list below once they had completed the assigned lesson.

Looking at your LiD Topic, What is the:

The heroic - - heroic in its **specificity**; **power** of discourse (good/bad)

Heroic Image - Think about something mysterious – A PERSON HUNCHED OVER a box, book or object – a big, old, but LOCKED object - - SOMETHING IMPORTANT HANGS IN THE LURCH – access to a topic/idea – What’s the key?

Narrative – what’s the story? Key to getting in the door and deeper a topic; image: hunched over a huge book – the key to these topics. Locked = ignorance of the discourse – story is that discourse creates us shared community

The idea of “baggage” - Encourage students to look into the history of the word – underlying message: all language is powered. (might use the ‘visual’ of a bag) – do series of games/activities first so students get a sense of language

Extremes/limits—looking for most obscure words; ‘isms’ and ‘ologies’ – antisestablishmentarianism; how word is defined/transferred into other languages

Sense of wonder—what ghosts emerge (previous uses of the word/ideas)

Revolt and idealism—stories of people who struggle to change the story associated with certain topics – in transportation, in Science etc.

Change of context-team games/collaborative play to use language properly

Go back to previous kinds of understanding - how engage tools of Mythic Understanding?

Binary oppositions –

Images – using a word – ghosts are stirred up...images of where the words are used/employed

Rhyme, Rhythm, Pattern –

Jokes, Humour – making jokes that reveal the meaning of specific word

Metaphor – the word as a bag (language is/has baggage)

Games -

Go back to previous kinds of understanding – how engage tools of Somatic Understanding?

The senses

The musical

Incongruity

Emotional Response (tied up with all of the above!)

Try to “insert” these into the IE Romantic Framework – the “outline” version is brief.