

11 Draw It Out

Purpose

Effective readers use imaging (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994) to make sense of a text. It is wise to help English learners to create images as often as they can when they listen, read, and write. This strategy helps students visualize what they are learning and then apply the new language to the concepts.

Target learning strategies

- Predicting
- Making inferences
- Using background knowledge
- Using images
- Taking notes
- Summarizing

Procedure

1. As students watch, draw a picture that illustrates a main event or concept in the reading. Don't worry about your level of talent—stick figures and shapes will do. Talk aloud as you draw. For example, this commentary might accompany your drawing of a map of the Nile River: *I'm going to draw a map. Here's a long river. These arrows show how the river flows north. People here call the south of the country "up" because it's upstream toward the beginning of the river. The river is going to a big sea. It makes a fan when it gets near the sea. Here's the sea. I'm going to draw people and houses and farms along the river, because almost everyone in the country lives near the river.*
2. Have students open their books to the relevant pages and help you label all the important parts of the picture: Egypt, the Nile, the Cataract, the Delta, Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt, and the Mediterranean.
3. Pair students. Have each partner draw a picture about a section of the book. Then they trade pictures and try to find the labels for everything that the partner drew. Partners and the teacher then check the labels for accuracy. If students have text summaries in their home languages, they can use those texts, along with graphic information in the text, to help them make the drawings. Then they use the English-language text to add labels in English.