

Introduction

The short story "Charles" by Shirley Jackson is an excellent topic for ESL lesson plans as it offers a compelling narrative that engages students while providing ample opportunities for language learning. The story follows a young boy named Laurie who comes home from school every day with tales of the mischievous behavior of a classmate named Charles. Through this story, students can explore vocabulary related to behavior and personality, engage in discussions about character motivations, and practice their reading and writing skills. Additionally, the unexpected twist at the end of the story provides an excellent opportunity for students to analyze and interpret the text, making it a valuable resource for ESL learning.

Vocabulary Building

Vocab

Vocab	Definition
Mischievous	showing a fondness for causing trouble in a playful way
Behavior	the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially toward others
Personality	the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character
Twist	an unexpected change or development in a story or situation
Interpret	to explain the meaning of something

Contextual Usage

1. The **mischievous** boy in the story always finds ways to cause trouble for his classmates.
2. Laurie's **behavior** changed after he started talking about Charles every day.
3. The story explores the **personality** of the main characters through their actions and dialogue.
4. The unexpected **twist** at the end of the story surprised the readers.
5. Students can **interpret** the ending of the story in different ways based on their understanding of the characters' motivations.

ESL Warm-up Activity

To set the tone for the lesson on "Charles" by Shirley Jackson, begin with a captivating warm-up activity. Provide students with a list of adjectives related to behavior and personality, such as "mischievous," "brave," "kind," "sneaky," and "honest." Ask them to choose an adjective that best describes a classmate or a fictional character and explain their choice. This activity not only introduces key vocabulary but also encourages students to think critically about character traits, laying the groundwork for discussions about the characters in the story.

Main ESL Lesson Activities

Vocabulary Activity: Character Traits

In this activity, provide students with a list of character traits related to the story "Charles." Ask them to match each trait with the character from the story who best exemplifies it. Encourage group discussions to justify their choices and promote critical thinking about the characters' personalities.

Listening Exercise: Character Dialogue

Play a recorded dialogue between two characters from the story. After listening, have students work in pairs to recreate the dialogue, focusing on intonation and expression. This hands-on exercise helps students practice listening comprehension and speaking skills while engaging with the story's characters.

Roleplay: Character Analysis

Assign each student a character from "Charles" and ask them to prepare a short roleplay depicting an additional scene involving that character. Encourage pair work or small group discussions to brainstorm and script their roleplay, fostering creativity and deeper understanding of the characters' motivations.

Reading and Writing: Twist Analysis

After reading the story, have students write a paragraph discussing their interpretation of the unexpected twist at the end. Encourage peer review and group discussions to share different perspectives, promoting critical analysis and reinforcing reading comprehension skills.

ESL Homework Assignment

For homework, ask students to choose a character from "Charles" and write a diary entry from that character's perspective, reflecting on the events of the story. Encourage them to use vocabulary related to behavior and personality traits discussed in class. This assignment reinforces reading comprehension, writing skills, and encourages students to empathize with the characters, deepening their understanding of the story.

Conclusion

Summary

The lesson on "Charles" by Shirley Jackson covered key vocabulary related to behavior and personality traits, engaged students in listening, speaking, and writing activities, and encouraged critical analysis of the story's unexpected twist.

Reflection

Encourage students to reflect on how the lesson improved their language skills, such as vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, and critical thinking. Prompt them to consider how understanding character motivations in a story can enhance their overall language development and analytical abilities.

Why this topic is great for ESL learning

Enhancing Language Skills

Studying "Charles" by Shirley Jackson provides ESL students with the opportunity to expand their vocabulary, improve reading comprehension, and engage in meaningful discussions about character behavior and motivations.

Critical Thinking Development

The unexpected twist in the story encourages students to think critically, analyze the plot, and interpret character actions, fostering essential skills for language development and overall cognitive abilities.