



VOCABULARY WORDS STUDY

Focus: Drawing Inferences from ASL Signs and Defining the Word

Objectives:

Students will

- Learn how to think independently during reading by critically interpreting a sign and drawing inferences from it to give meaning to an English word. This activity focuses on the word "wise" from page 3 of *The Baobab* however another unknown word can be selected.
- Build on iPad navigation skills by moving around the *Baobab* book and accessing the sign language glossary.

Formative: The students are able to fingerspell the words and try to guess what the word means based on illustration, facial expression and location of the sign.

Summative: The students are able to explain different strategies on how they can figure out the words and when they can use those strategies.

Materials needed:

iPad with *The Baobab* storybook app

Utilize classroom technology projectors (if applicable)

Time needed: 45 minutes

Motivation:

Ask the students how often they come across an unknown word in an English text, and what they do to find out its' meaning. Some strategies proposed might include consulting a dictionary, asking a teacher or a parent or leaving the word alone.



The signed translation of the English word "wise" – Page 3 The Baobab

Procedure:

1. Go to page 3 of The Baobab and ask the class to read the sentence without playing the video. Ask them what they think the sentence means to identify initial understanding.
2. Point to the word "wise" and ask students to **fingerspell** it. Ask students to click on the word and watch the signed translation. Then ask what they think the word means by **looking at the way it is signed** (The index finger is raised as a hook to the side of the forehead and moved forward twice.) To create questions to guide students when they might be incorrect like "Why is the sign in the head area?" Ideally the students will indicate that it is something to do with the head, and with thinking.
3. Now repeat the **facial expression** that the signer is using when they sign "wise" and get the students to express what they think the word means by the simultaneous facial expression.
4. Show the full sign language video and get the students to spot the word "wise" in the story. Indicate that it is **next to the word** "old." Discuss what the word could mean to the students with prompts such as "You know that the man has lived a long time because he is old, perhaps this makes him very experienced" or "Why is the old man walking slowly? Perhaps he is thinking a lot?"
5. Bring in **real life examples** of who the learner thinks is "wise" in their life such as their grandma and their older cousin and clarify any misunderstandings e.g. if the students think "wise" is a literal equivalent to "clever" or "smart." Come to a **group agreement** of what the word "wise" means.
6. Explain the difference between a signed story in ASL and the English equivalent. Indicate that some English words are not signed in ASL such as "seemed" because it is included in facial expressions or other signs.
7. This activity can be repeated with other unknown words such as "curious" or "adventurous" page 2, "important" page 6, "forbidden" page 7 or "swatted" page 9. You can ask students to get into pairs to look at the sign of the unknown word first and have a discussion about it before watching the signed video of the whole sentence.

Closure:

Ask students how they felt about **looking at the sign** and **surrounding text** to work out what an English word means. Remind them that they can **look at the place where the sign is, facial expressions** and think about the links to their **real life**. Discuss how they can use this strategy to determine the meaning of an unknown English word while watching an interpreter or watching an online ASL translation of English text.

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