Pixton Practices Handout
Reading

For Use With Pixton PowerUp Webinar

Best Practice #1: Reader Response

Prep

To prepare for a Reader Response activity, select a text for students to read. The selected text should be a narrative text that can be read independently with a plot that can be easily followed. Pixton can be used to have readers respond to the text in many different ways. They can create comics that show key moments of character development for the text or summarize the entire plot. For instance, Pixton is a great tool to make it easier for students to analyze characters or retell the plot of a more challenging text, such as a Shakespearean drama.

Activity

After students have finished a novel or short story, set them the task of recreating scenes from the text from memory. Students can demonstrate an understanding of the text by including settings, characters, dialogue, and plot points in their comics. Depending on the length of the text, it may be beneficial to group students and encourage them to work together to summarize the plot points of the text. This activity is extremely versatile and can fit many different needs in a classroom. Completing a reading response on Pixton can be used as a class discussion topic, a formative assessment, or even a summative assessment.

PowerUp Variations

A variation is called "Point of View," where students recreate sections of the text through a different character's perspective. This encourages students to think critically about character actions, thoughts, and feelings while also showing mastery of the major plot points of a text. Another variation called "Change of Scene" has students change the time or place where the text occurred. "What If?" is another variation where students change details about a character and map out how that would impact the story. If students are able to alter the setting or other parts of the text without losing the overall plot of the story, it signifies mastery of the text. After completing this variation, students can view other comics and discuss how the text has changed. A further

variation is creating student book clubs, where each club reads a different text. After completing the text, book clubs can create comics and present them to the class as an end-of-unit assessment.

Differentiation

Adjust Text: Offer a variety of texts that students are able to read independently. Pixton's many characters and setting options make it easy to adapt to a wide variety of stories.

Partner Work: Students can be paired up to gain confidence in creating comics on Pixton before attempting to work independently.

Demonstration: Walk students through the process of creating a comic based on a text that has been previously read. Allow students to offer suggestions for what plot points to depict in Pixton and suggestions of how to best show the story.

Best Practice #2: Vocabulary Visuals

Prep

In this activity, students are able to learn new vocabulary words in context or demonstrate mastery of new words by using comics on Pixton's student-friendly website. As vocabulary is one of the five concepts that are essential to a student's ability to comprehend what they read, it is crucial that students are able to practice using context to discover a new word's meaning and practice using that word to ensure mastery. To prepare for this activity, students will need access to the vocabulary words being targeted. These words should either be unfamiliar words they may encounter in a text or specialized academic words. This can be an excellent opportunity to utilize Pixton's AI-enabled Activity Generator to create a list of relevant vocabulary. Using Pixton, students will demonstrate mastery of terms by creating a comic using the words provided. This is an engaging way to not only deepen a student's understanding but also assess their learning.

Activity

Students should be presented with a list of vocabulary words from a text that they are reading. These words should be unfamiliar but common enough that students will see them in many settings or texts. After reviewing each word with students and giving sentence examples of each, students should begin to plan out a comic that incorporates all of the targeted words.

PowerUp Variations

There are a couple of ways to take this activity to the next level. Students can use more academic or specialized vocabulary words in their comics. This adds a challenge that also enhances cross-curricular learning. Another option, called "Vocabulary Scavenger Hunt," is to have students put a blank space for the targeted vocabulary word(s) and encourage other students to go on a scavenger hunt from comic to comic to see if they can figure out which new word is missing. In doing this, students are able to check their own understanding of the word and it will open a dialogue for students to discuss nuances of vocabulary words. This variation is flexible in that students can work off of a whole class list or come up with their own vocabulary word based on the text being studied. Student engagement can easily be increased by taking ownership of a word and creating a comic to teach their classmates.

Differentiation

Group Work: If there are a large number of vocabulary words, it may be beneficial for students to be grouped. This way, students can share the work of creating panels for their comic and it allows for more collaboration and shared learning.

Alternative Lists: This activity works with any level of vocabulary words, so students are able to create comics using words at their level.

Visual Learning: In order to teach a new vocabulary word, students can be shown a comic that demonstrates the meaning of the word. Often, students benefit from a visual demonstration of a new vocabulary word.

Best Practice #3: Comprehension Monitoring

Prep

Ensuring that students are monitoring their comprehension while reading is a difficult yet crucial skill. Using Pixton after reading a chapter or section of text offers students an engaging way for them to monitor their comprehension as they read. Students will be excited to showcase their comprehension and there will be opportunities for students to practice rereading when they forget part of a text.

Activity

Students should have a chapter book that they are reading individually or a book the class is reading. Set students the task of reading a chapter, then pausing and completing a panel of their

comic. This allows students to summarize the chapter they have read and offers an opportunity for discussions about their takeaways from their reading. At the end of the book, students will have a panel for each chapter.

PowerUp Variations

A variation of this activity is to have students make a prediction panel prior to reading a chapter. This allows students to activate their prior reading comprehension while also practicing inferring and making predictions. Another variation, called "Do you have any questions?", has students use their panel to pose a question they have from their reading. In doing this, students are able to use examples from later in the text to answer previous questions that they had or discuss their questions with peers. Lastly, students can create a panel based on an important quote or section of text from their reading in a variation called "Say What?" This is a great discussion starter for students to explain which quotes they chose and why.

Differentiation

Class Discussion: By initiating a class discussion after the chapter, students are able to listen to ideas from other classmates before starting the panels for their own comic. This can be used as a scaffolding tool while students are learning to monitor their comprehension independently.

Notes Page: Offer a page for students to take notes as they are reading. In doing this, students are better able to monitor their comprehension in the moment.

Alternative Texts: If monitoring comprehension through an entire chapter is too challenging, start students with a short story or a novel with shorter chapters. This allows students to notice the lapse in comprehension earlier than with a more advanced text.

Associated Research

Cabrera, P., Castillo, L., González, P., Quiñónez, A., & Ochoa, C. (2018). The impact of using *Pixton* for teaching grammar and vocabulary in the EFL Ecuadorian context. *Teaching English with Technology*, *18*(1), 53–76. https://tewtjournal.org/download/5-the-impact-of-using-pixton-for-teaching-grammar-and-vocabulary-in-the-efl-ecuadorian-context-by-paola-cabrera-luz-castillo-paul-gonzalez-ana-quinonez-and-cesar-ochoa/

Duke, N. K., Ward, A. E., & Pearson, P. D. (2021). The science of reading comprehension instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, *74*(6), 663–672. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1993

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