

Imagine That!

Stories

Visualizing
and
Verbalizing
For Language Comprehension and Thinking

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Introduction:

The mysterious, the unusual, the unexplained... Imagery is the medium through which language that describes our diverse world is revealed in all its detail and complexity.

The *Imagine That!* series provides nonfiction stories with which to practice building imagery for oral and written language comprehension. These challenging, high-imagery stories introduce true and unusual topics for students to visualize, including natural disasters, legends, unique animals, odd plants, mysteries, fascinating phenomena, and people of great achievement. Each story is presented in language appropriate to the grade level, and the content is sure to capture the interest of students and instructors alike.

The mysteries of the world are waiting. Let's fly.

Nanci Bell
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How to Use *Imagine That! Stories*:

The *Imagine That! Stories* can be used with any program of instruction to develop imagery for language comprehension, and they can also be used specifically with the *Visualizing and Verbalizing*[®] (V/V[®]) program. These stories give students practice visualizing the big picture, the gestalt, and should be used when doing the steps that develop concept imagery as a base for critical thinking.

While the stories have been arranged in sections that align with specific steps of V/V, all *Imagine That! Stories* can be used with any of the following V/V steps:

- Sentence by Sentence
- Sentence by Sentence with Higher Order Thinking (HOT)
- Multiple Sentence with HOT
- Whole Paragraph with HOT
- Paragraph by Paragraph with HOT
- Whole Page with HOT

Tips:

● **Story Arrangement**

Although all the stories in this volume are written at a second-grade reading level, within each section, stories have been sequentially ordered to increase in conceptual difficulty.

● **Illustrations**

Illustrations have been provided for stories that contain unfamiliar subjects. These images can be presented to the students before the paragraph is read, to help them build their own imagery.

● **Topic Sentences**

You may find that the first sentence of a paragraph introduces a general topic to be imaged, and the rest of the paragraph goes on to describe detailed imagery for the topic. For example, in the story “A Secret Message Drop,” the first line reads, “Spies use a dead drop—a secret way to pass messages—when they want to stay hidden.” While the sentence contains concrete detail that can be imaged, such as the spies and their messages, the sentence also contains some concepts that require further information. For example, this sentence does not tell us what the dead drop method is, or how the spies stay hidden. When working with students, it is appropriate to have them leave that portion of their image indistinct. You may explain to the students that the rest of the paragraph will fill in the blanks in their imagery.

● **Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Questions**

The stories are followed by main idea, inference, conclusion, evaluation, and prediction questions. The order of these HOT questions is such that they stimulate students’ thinking first about the gestalt and then about the details of the story. In some questions, key words are italicized to indicate emphasis. Also, contrast questions are included to stimulate and guide the students’ critical reasoning. Finally, in some instances, the HOT questions introduce additional information, from which the students can extend their thinking about the story.



7 Tied-Up Ox

A farmer might tie his ox to a clump of grass instead of a tree. Sometimes an ox gets scared and thrashes back and forth. If tied to a strong tree, he will hurt himself while trying to get free. But the ox can yank the grass out of the ground and not get hurt.

From what you pictured...

What is the main idea of this story?

Why do you think a farmer would tie up his ox?

Why do you think the ox gets scared?

Do you think the ox stops thrashing once he hurts himself? Why or why not?

Why do you think the ox hurts himself when tied to a *tree* but not grass?

26 Crater of Diamonds State Park

People visit one state park to dig for gems. There they walk through a large dirt field. They scoop the dirt onto wire screens. Then they shake the screens to sift out rocks. Each day someone finds a small white, brown, or yellow diamond. People get to keep the stones they find. Some sell their gems for thousands of dollars.

From what you pictured...

What is the main idea of this story?

Why do you think people come to this state park?

Why do you think the guests use the wire screens? Why not just use their fingers?

What might someone do if they found a diamond? Explain.

Do you think there are many places where people can dig up and keep diamonds? Why or why not?

27 Crocodile Bird

It is said there is a kind of bird that is safe in the mouth of a crocodile. This bird lives near a river where crocs sun themselves on the banks. Sometimes a croc will open his jaws wide. Then this bird flies down and hops inside the croc's mouth. The bird picks bits of rotting food from between the croc's teeth and eats them. When the croc's teeth are clean, the bird flies off unharmed.

From what you pictured...

What is the main idea of this story?

Why do you think the crocodile does not eat the bird?

Do you think *any* bird could do this, or just the crocodile bird? Explain.

Do you think this bird is afraid of crocodiles? Why or why not?

Why do you think the crocodile opens his jaws *wide*?

36 In a Tight Space

A group of students once tried to stuff as many people as they could into a phone booth. The first people in stood straight up. Then more wedged in on their sides. Some went in headfirst. Others squeezed their feet and legs in first. People outside the booth helped push more students in. In the end, twenty-five people had crammed into the booth!

From what you pictured...

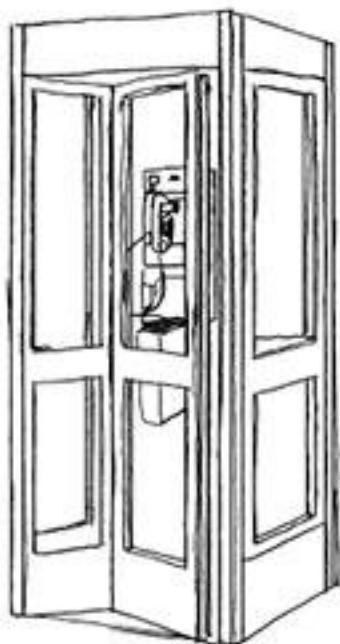
What is the main idea of the story?

Why do you think the students needed help getting into the booth?

Why do you think someone would squeeze their feet and legs in first instead of their head?

Do you think the students could still use the phone in the booth once it was full? Why or why not?

Do you think it was difficult for the people to get out of the booth? Why or why not?



52 Robot Roach

Some scientists studied a cockroach to learn how it moved. The roach has a flat body and six long legs. He runs very fast and can jump high in the air. He can climb over rocks and straight up walls. He can also crawl through cracks and under doors.

The scientists filmed the roach doing many things. The bug crawled over balls of wax and up steep ramps. Then the scientists put the roach on a treadmill. They watched the bug's legs move as he ran. They viewed the film and wrote many notes.

The scientists made a backpack for the roach that controlled how he moved. They used a remote control to turn the bug to the left or right. They could even make him jump. But sometimes they could not control the roach. The bug ran into walls and fell off the side of a table.

Then the scientists made a robot that moves like a roach. The robot has six metal legs that bend. Rubber tubes stretch along each leg. Puffs of air shoot through the tubes and move the legs. The scientists put a small camera on the robot's head. Soon it will help find people trapped in rubble after an earthquake.

From what you pictured...

What is the main idea of this story?

Why do you think the scientists *filmed* the cockroach?

Why do you think the scientists wanted to make the cockroach jump?

Why do you think the backpack failed to control the cockroach?

Why do you think the scientists put a camera on the robot's head?

Currently, many robots have wheels instead of legs. Why might a cockroach-shaped robot be better?

