

Lesson Plan for a Mathematics Class

GIST

Topic: Word Problems

Objectives: The student will... *(to be completed by the classroom teacher)*

Set Induction: The teacher asks what it means to have the “gist” of a topic. Discuss this, with examples.

Activities:

1. The teacher explains that the class will be working word problems using a literacy strategy that will help them be more successful in comprehending exactly what the problem is, asking them to do because they will find what the “gist” of the problem is before they begin to solve it.
2. Read a problem together.
3. Students take turns telling the teacher words that they find most essential. The teacher may list the words on a chart on the overhead or board. After the list of 12 words is established, the students make suggestions to revise the list until the class comes to some consensus.
4. Read another problem together. Students now are asked to line out information that is not essential for solving the problem.
5. Students are given problems to work on their own or in small groups.

Closure: Students practice with more problems in large group.



Evaluation Suggestions: Completed lists of essential/non-essential words, or a writing activity that allows the students to comment on the usefulness of the strategy on an individual basis.

Other Applications: The GIST strategy was designed to help students with writing summaries (Cunningham, 1982). You have seen a modification of it here to enhance solving word problems in the mathematics classroom. The procedure, however, is effective in various content areas to encourage students to generate a summarizing sentence from any segment of text (such as, in math, a single problem).

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