



Reading Instruction for Middle School Students

**Lessons for Improving Comprehension
Through “Iqbal”
by Francesco D’Adamo**

Adapted from intervention materials developed by the Texas
Center for Learning Disabilities

Preferred Citation

The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk. (2012). *Reading instruction for middle school students: Lessons for improving comprehension through “Iqbal” by Francesco D’Adamo*. Austin, TX: Author.



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Overview

About These Lesson Plans

The lesson plans within this novel unit represent examples of instruction provided to struggling readers in middle school (grades 6–8) as part of the research of the Texas Center for Learning Disabilities (TCLD). Research staff members developed the lesson plans, which align with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and certified teachers implemented them. For more information, see the Project 3 page of the TCLD website at www.texasldcenter.org/research/project3.asp.

All of the activities in the lesson plans are research based, and references to this research can be found throughout. They are appropriate for use with struggling readers in middle school and focus on improving reading comprehension. This set of plans is to be used with the novel *Iqbal* by Francesco D’Adamo. *Iqbal* is an historical novel about child slavery in Pakistan. Early in the book, readers meet Iqbal Masih, who was sold into slavery by his debt-ridden family and worked in a carpet factory. Working conditions were terrible and Iqbal’s repeated attempts to escape are thwarted until he meets the leader of the Bonded Liberation Front of Pakistan. Finally, Iqbal is freed from his master and works tirelessly until his death to free children and speak out against slavery.

During these lessons, students will do the following (corresponding English Language Arts and Reading TEKS for grades 6–8 are listed below each objective):

- **Learn important vocabulary**

Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. Students are expected to:

- determine the meaning of grade-level academic English words derived from Latin, Greek, or other linguistic roots and affixes (Texas Administrative Code [TAC] §110.18–110.20(b)(2)(A))
- use context (e.g., cause and effect or compare and contrast organizational text structures) to determine or clarify the meaning of unfamiliar or multiple meaning words (TAC §110.18(b)(2)(B))
- use context (within a sentence and in larger sections of text) to determine or clarify the meaning of unfamiliar or ambiguous words (TAC §110.19(b)(2)(B))
- use context (within a sentence and in larger sections of text) to determine or clarify the meaning of unfamiliar or ambiguous words or words with novel meanings (TAC §110.20(b)(2)(B))

- **Make predictions prior to reading and verify predictions after reading**

Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author’s message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to:

- Grade 6: make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding (19 TAC §110.17(b)(D))
- Grades 7–8: make complex inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding (19 TAC §110.17(b)(D))

- **Access background knowledge prior to reading**

Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author’s message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to:

- establish purposes for reading selected texts based upon own or others’ desired outcome to enhance comprehension (19 TAC §110.17(b)(A))

- **Read text through various formats (e.g., partner reading, choral reading) to learn and practice various reading comprehension strategies (e.g., main idea, summarization)**

See corresponding TEKS for each comprehension skill below.

- **Practice generating Level 1, Right There; Level 2, Putting It Together; and Level 3, Making Connections, questions**

Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author’s message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to:

- Grades 6–8: ask literal, interpretive, evaluative, and universal questions of text (19 TAC §110.17(b)(B))
- Grade 6: monitor and adjust comprehension (e.g., using background knowledge; creating sensory images; rereading a portion aloud; generating questions; 19 TAC §110.17(b)(C))

- **Practice “getting the gist” of an entire chapter**

Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author’s message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to:

- Grades 7–8: reflect on understanding to monitor comprehension (e.g., summarizing and synthesizing; making textual, personal, and world connections; creating sensory images; 19 TAC §110.17(b)(C))
- Grades 6–8: summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order within a text and across texts (19 TAC §110.17(b)(E))

- **Learn how to summarize a chapter**

Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author’s message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to:

- summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order within a text and across texts (19 TAC §110.17(b)(E))

Prerequisites

This novel unit assumes that students have previously been taught how to “get the gist” (main idea) of a passage or chapter and generate Level 1, Right There, and Level 2, Putting It Together questions. If your students cannot do these activities independently, we recommend teaching the novel unit for “Any Small Goodness” first.

Preparation

Each lesson is to be completed in 1 or 2 days of approximately 60 minutes of instruction each. Teacher guides note the intended time for each lesson. Materials include an overview of daily activities (organized by chapter), options for structuring text reading, teacher guides, student logs, vocabulary pictures (for some chapters) and supplemental materials for students. All of the materials are available for free download at www.texasldcenter.org.

It is important that teachers preread lesson plans and chapters prior to teaching. They will need to prepare student materials (e.g., word cards, vocabulary pictures printed in color), develop instructional examples, prepare vocabulary instruction (e.g., examples and nonexamples), and select reading formats.

Professional Development

Teachers can learn more about implementing the instructional practices and strategies described within lesson plans by accessing the Professional Development link on the side of the Lesson Plans webpage: www.texasldcenter.org/lessonplans.

We also encourage you to explore the other helpful resources on the TCLD website.

Questions

For questions related to lesson plans or other TCLD work, contact us at www.texasldcenter.org/contact.asp.