

## **CLOZE PROCEDURE**

### **Purpose**

The cloze technique may be used for informal assessment or as an instructional strategy. Use this strategy to help students increase their understanding of text. Typically, in this procedure, every *n*th word is deleted and replaced with a blank of uniform length. The number of words deleted is based upon the level of conceptual difficulty of the material and the competency of the reader.

### **Steps**

Use the following three-phase teaching procedure as a basic framework to implement the cloze technique:

#### ***Phase 1: Presentation and Preparation***

Use prereading activities, such as developing a purpose for reading, to motivate the student and build background information. Provide short practice sessions. Work with the student and model how the exercises are completed. Select materials at the student's independent reading level.

#### ***Phase 2: Preview and Completion***

Have the student read the passage three times. During the first reading the student gains an overview of the material and fills in the blanks mentally. In the second reading, the student fills in all of the blanks. For the third reading, the student checks to see if the responses make sense. During the second and third readings, students may work in pairs or small groups.

#### ***Phase 3: Follow-up***

The most important step is the follow-up conference. Discuss with the student(s) their choices, review other acceptable alternatives, and ask the student(s) to explain why they chose a particular response. If needed, discuss specific context clues that are found around the blank and assist in word selection. As a final step, have student(s) compare their responses with the original.

### **Adaptations**

Use adaptations of this procedure based upon the purpose of the instruction. The following applications were field tested by Thomas (1978).

#### **1. *Context/Content Clues***

Delete the specific terms that complete the key ideas in the passage. The reader then focuses on these essential elements. This adaptation is particularly appropriate for content-area material.

Example: The largest state in the United States is \_\_\_\_\_.

**2. Process Strategies/Combined Clues**

Provide different graphophonic clues to help the student identify the word, such as the initial consonant, several letters, or the ending of the word.

Example: The little girl loved to ride her b\_\_\_\_.

**3. Specific Phonic Elements**

Select specific phonic elements to delete from words, such as consonant blends or digraphs or short vowel sounds. This adaptation requires the student to use context clues as well as phonic skills and may be used to reinforce specific phonic elements that the student is learning.

Example: The b\_g d\_g r\_n to the house.

**4. Specific Morphemic Elements**

Delete root words, prefixes, or suffixes. If necessary, the specific elements to use can be listed for the student.

Example: The \_\_\_\_school teach\_\_ was sing\_\_\_\_ the children's favorite song\_.

**5. Relationships: Function Words**

Delete function words from various types of syntactic structures, such as prepositions, articles, conjunctions, or auxiliary verbs or delete a particular part of speech. The purpose is to help the student attend to language structure.

Example: Sally \_\_ leaving \_\_\_\_ school \_\_ the morning.

**6. Relationships: Pronouns and Pronoun Referents**

Delete pronouns, selected pronoun referents, or both.

Example: Mary had helped Jim all year. \_\_\_\_ had treated \_\_\_\_ kindly.

**7. Relationships: Organizational Patterns**

Delete the keywords and phrases that signal the organizational pattern of a passage, such as the words *first*, *next*, or *finally*. This variation can also be used with words signaling time order, such as *before*, *after*, or *when*; words signaling a comparison/contrast organizational pattern, such as *however*, *but*, *although*, or *yet*; or words signaling a cause/effect organizational pattern, such as *because*, *therefore*, or *consequently*.

Example: When you start any project, \_\_\_\_\_ plan the steps and \_\_\_\_\_ decide what materials you will need.

*Adapted from:*

Thomas, K. (1978). Instructional applications of the cloze technique. *Reading World*, 18, 1-12.