TEACHING LITERATURE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS

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One of the present struggles encountered by teachers is inculcating appreciation of literature in class discussion. Many learners find reading literary piece boring, as a result, they don’t pay attention during discussion. The problems come along with the students’ varying interest in which considered barriers in learning the lessons. Another issue that involves teaching literature is the problem about language comprehension which involves the correct grammar use. Some of the students are having difficulties for self – expression because they do not know how to use English language properly. However, the importance of literature holds the power of improving students’ language kills, fostering critical thinking skills and understanding the world around us.

Literature is usually related to prose and poetry and other literary works which are well written. Literature is a reflection of life. It is a form of a creative art of the mind of an author and its object is the human life using language as a medium to share and hold ideas (Rahman 2017). Literature shares a way in the study of language. It is seen as a useful vehicle for teaching and learning both basic language skills and language areas which affords language educators enormous advantages. According to Hişmanoğlu (2005) “The use of literature as a technique for teaching both basic language skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking and language areas such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation is very popular in learning foreign language and teaching nowadays”. Literature helps in promoting the acquisition of learners’ essential language skill opportunities, and helps to expand their language awareness. It also supports to stimulate their personal intellectual growth in perceiving and appreciating the rich literary works.
The literature builds cultural value among all learners. Every culture or tradition is built on stories—histories, myths and legends, fables, religions, and etc. If students are expected to understand and appreciate the culture to which they are belong, they first need to learn about the stories that that culture has. While books are not the only source of stories, they are one of the most important. Take the Bible as an example. It is commonly taught in some form because it has influenced our culture. Literature helps to expand students’ horizon. Reading literary pieces which is a goal of education exposes the learners to ideas from other cultures and teaches them about the histories and people of other times and places. Furthermore, literature is an effective way in building and enhancing vocabulary. Having a large and wide-range of vocabulary is necessary for many reasons. It helps not only for both writing and reading abilities but also for allowing in more complex discourse. The larger your vocabulary is, the more in depth and thoughtful discussions you can have in dealing with important topics and issues, both in and outside of the classroom. To speak clearly with the language use, it is important that you have a stock knowledge of limitless vocabulary, so the best way to have this is to get exposed to new words through reading. In addition, literature is also a key in improving writing skills. As you read you are able to acquire writing styles of different literary authors. Writing skills could be developed in many ways. When you keep reading you are being exposed in language, learn in the way it sounds and feels when put together in the right ways brings the creation of literary piece. Learners who are encouraged to read acquire knowledge of the ways on how language works, so this helps to have an advantage when it comes time for them to write.

To have great appreciation for literature there are strategies that a teacher could adapt.

Here are the 12 Strategies in Teaching Literature
1. Make use the combinations of classic media and modern together, leveraging one against the other. Music, video streams, short videos like TikTok or video from Youtube, video games, plays, poems, film, posters, poems, essays, novels, podcasts, etc.

2. Encouraged students to analyze diverse media forms for their strengths and weaknesses and get involved in both classic and digital forms.

3. Lead the students in transforming essays into videos, into podcasts, into letters, into simply-coded games, into poems or into apps.

4. Give the students a chance to choose media while you are responsible in choosing themes and/or academic and/or quality standards.

5. Choose the media first when designing units, then come up with the standards.

6. Design units accordingly where students can work collaboratively.

7. Use RAFT Strategy. Provide them enough time to revise media as a response to new roles, audiences, formats, or topics, tones, or themes. Students who are experimenting using this strategy are experimenting with media design, which is exactly what authors do for in-depth learning.

8. Lead the learners in using a thematic focus to design units, assessments, project-based learning. The ability to do the texts to nail in using perceived skills gives them the ability to form concepts, so teach through that. Help the students to focus on what is being said and why—and how.

9. Expose your students in working on tools for the digital text annotation on pdfs, note-sharing which can help students mark text, document questions and insights, and also revisit their thinking or collaborative skills in working others during the reading of classic texts.
10. Organize developing social media-based reading clubs.

11. Invite your students to create and produce ongoing podcast or YouTube channel on relevant themes, authors, texts, etc.

12. Connecting the old with the new one can build authentic output. This is a ways to center the knowledge to the demands of modern readers.

Reference:

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