

TV GUIDE: COMMUNICATION/LANGUAGE ARTS SKILLS

Educational Activities to Develop Skills through Television

Your TV Show

skills: organization, outlining, giving instructions

Write your own tv show. This could be an actual script of dialogue or an outline of general ideas and characters to reflect your community experiences

TV Characters

skills: drawing, parts of speech

Have students draw characters from favorite cartoons and try to list adjectives describing them.

New TV

skills: characterization

Have students develop alternate characters or new episodes involving characters on a tv show. These could be acted out in class.

TV Stars

skills: characterization

Have students develop a script for their favorite tv show, in which they are the star or hero. Using a camcorder, record the student stars.

TV Character Studies

skills: classification of characters

Have students pick a characteristic or several characteristics of people. Pick a tv show. Ask students to list all the characters on the show that have the characteristics that you are studying. Compare and discuss in class the next day.

Neighborhood News

skills: organization and communication

Have your students write, produce, and broadcast a local news program based on news of their city and/or neighborhood. Local TV news is very negative and far too brief. Students should be encouraged to find positive things happening in their neighborhoods or solutions to problems they face. Students should be encouraged to fully develop their pieces through discussion and peer and teacher evaluations.

Symbols for Channels

skills: memory and matching

Depending on the grade level, list 5 or more channels, networks, and emblems on paper. Students must match them correctly, for example:

5 peacock NBC

A Letter a Day

skills: vocabulary building

Students choose a letter, for example, "C". While watching their favorite show each time a "C" word is used they write it down. Set a limit such as five words. Once students reach the limit, they are to define the words and then write sentences for each word.

TV Word Search

skills: word recognition

Make your own puzzle and let one of your classmates solve it. Make it from the names of your favorite TV shows.

TV Discussions

skills: oral language development

While watching a program, students, ideally with parents, discuss what happened, what will happen next and why. At the end, they discuss why the characters may have acted as they did. Older children may be asked to create an outline.

Retelling TV

skills: sequencing, critical thinking

Students retell the plot of a program and then decide on a new ending. Students write or dictate a new ending as a class or individually. Finished work can be published or even dramatized.

Alternative Endings

skills: prediction, problem solving

Using boxes, empty paper towel rolls, markers, pencils, crayons, tape, scissors, glue, construction paper, etc., have students develop their own endings to previously watched tv programs. Discuss the shows, talk about alternative endings and encourage students to develop their own endings.

TV Parts of Speech

skills: listening, comprehension

Students practice recognizing and identifying various parts of speech while watching their favorite programs. Example: Write down 10 adjectives while watching "Martin".

TV Questions

Skills: comprehension

Assign students a specific television program to watch. The next day, ask detailed questions about the content of the program including character and plot questions.

Plugged into TV

skills: comparison

Have your class read a book that has been made into a movie. Upon completion of the book, bring in a videotape of the movie. Have a class compare the two. Be sure to discuss poetic license. Discuss why things may have been deleted or added in the video and for what effects.

TV Discussions

skills: oral argumentation

Assign topics such as "What effects do you think violence on tv has on the kids in your class or neighborhood" to students and allow a few minutes of oral discussion.

TV Writing/TV Drawing

skills: writing, drawing, and listening

Have students watch an episode of their favorite show make a comic book about the episode or write a summary of the episode or its theme. To expand on the activity, teachers may have students name the characters on the show and describe their characteristics. They can also tell how the episode ended etc.

TV News

skills: listening and writing

Have your students watch the news and then write a summary of the leading story.

TV Outline

skills: outlining, organization and finding main points

After watching their favorite half-hour program, have students write an outline of the show's most important points.

TV Rewrites

skills: writing and editing

Have students rewrite the ending of a tv show as if:

- a. the time period were different
- b. the location were different
- c. characters were from different cultural backgrounds

TV Interviews

skills: improve verbal and interpersonal skills

Have students watch shows in which the host interviews guests then have students write brief paragraphs of what they observed. Bring in video clips of various talk shows in which the host is interviewing guests. Discuss the pro's and con's of each interviewer's style and/or technique.

TV Violence

skills: descriptive writing

Pick a show known to have violence to watch. Ask students to write down descriptions of violent incidents and a judgment about whether that was the right thing to do. Discuss next day in class.

YOUR TURN

Many other language arts projects can be developed based on TV.

By having students develop language arts skills with tv as the source, they become more critical viewers--and we make more connections with their out-of-school time.