
Title	Protocol for student interviews comprehending reading comprehension
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**Protocol for Student Interviews
Comprehending Reading Comprehension
(OER 9/10 RS)**

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Purpose

The purpose of the student interview is to get the students' perspective on the lessons. Ask teachers to select two students who are not shy and are generally willing to talk. It doesn't matter if they are strong or weak readers. In this case we are hoping for students who will feel comfortable talking to us. Teachers are to call the parents of the selected students in advance and ask if they (the parents) agree to have the students participate in the interview. If no, another student will be selected.

Overview

The interview is divided into three parts. Part 1 (questions 1-5) is intended to help the student remember the lesson/check if the student remembers the lesson, and elicit comments on the lesson in general. Part 2 (questions 6-10) is intended to determine if the students remember or notice anything about QtA or the classroom interaction. Part 3 (questions 11-13) attempts to elicit student ideas about reading in general. Question 14 is added to give the students the opportunity to ask questions, if any.

As part of the interview, you will need to show video excerpts and artefacts (eg. slides, copies of text) to students during the interview; therefore, class observers must be sure to ask teachers for copies of any slides/materials on the day of the lesson. These artefacts are essential for helping student to remember the lesson in a concrete way. In reference to interview procedures for participants of different ages, Marshall and Rossman (2006, 106) note that young children can be quite verbose while adolescents can be self-conscious and even taciturn. However, our prior experience with children in P2-P4 age range at this school (research notes, SOG), found that in one-on-one interviews with classroom observers the children tended to be very quiet, shy and hesitant to speak. Therefore, our interview plan assumes that children might need a warm up stage (questions 1-3) and artefacts from the lesson to stimulate their responses. In interviews with 'reticent young males' on the difficult topic sexuality, Bahn and Barratt-Pugh (2011) found that use of concrete artefacts, especially images, were very helpful in encouraging responses. Although our age group is different and our topic would seem to be less fraught, for young children talking about their classroom lessons with a slightly known adult might be quite intimidating. Therefore, copies of lesson slides or other materials as well as lesson videos are used throughout the interview.

Equipment and materials needed

2 audio recorders with lanyards
Sheet of interview questions
Laptop with class video and copy of class slides (if any) loaded
Copies of any other materials used during the lesson
Notepad and pen

Procedure

Turn on recorder before or as soon as student arrives.
Ask student to sit down, introduce yourself.
Explain the purpose of the interview and ask the student if he/she is willing to do the interview? (As below). Ask the student to say his/her name. (e.g. How do I address you? Are you ___?___)
If yes, place 2nd recorder on student. Ask student to sign assent form.

Proceed with interview.

Assent

Say something like

Hi, my name is _____. You know that your teacher selected you to participate in an interview today?

I am going to ask you some questions about the lesson I observed the other day. Is it ok to talk about that together? Is it ok if I interview you and record our interview?

If, 'yes', ask the student to sign the assent form and proceed with the interview.

If 'no', thank the student and send him/her back to class. (In this case, we can ask the teacher to schedule another student at another time. It is important that the teacher know the students have a choice about whether or not to participate and if they do not want to do the interview, that is fine. They should not be pushed to participate. Instead, we can seek another volunteer who is comfortable with the procedure.)

Interview Questions

- 1) Ask: Do you remember this lesson? (Show the initial slide that shows the title of the story. If needed show the slide that shows the beginning of the story. If a picture is used at the beginning of the lesson, you might also have that picture as a 3rd slide to jog the student's memory. However, be careful of pictures that are used for 'warm up' and not directly related to the story as these might get the student off topic.)
 - a. If yes, continue with interview. If no, show a few more of the slides to help the student remember the lesson.
- 2) Ask: What did you do in this lesson?
 - a. If no answer, pause at least 5 sec then ask: "Maybe you did some reading or writing or drawing?" Allow the student to respond.
 - b. Then ask: "And maybe there was some discussion with the teacher or with other students?" Allow the student to respond.
 - c. "Or maybe you answered the teacher's questions?" Allow student to respond.
 - d. "Was there any test or worksheet to do?"
- 3) Ask: What do you remember **most** from this lesson?
- 4) Show video with intro of lesson (1-3 min excerpt). This should overlap with the ppt that you showed for Q1. You might need to show it 2-3 times as student might initially be focused on looking for himself/herself and friends rather than seeing the 'lesson'. During the play and replay of the video, ask
 - a. Do you see yourself? Do you see your friends?
 - b. Do you see your teacher?
 - c. And can you see what is happening in the class?

- 5) Ask: What else do you remember about this lesson?
- 6) Show a 'QtA excerpt' from the video (1-3 min). This should be an excerpt in which the teacher uses a QtA query and ideally a segment of the lesson when there are multiple responses from students. You do NOT have to tell the student exactly what was said, but let the student watch the video 1-3 times as needed.
- Ask: What can you say about this part of the lesson?
- 7) Ask: What do you think the teacher wanted you **to learn** in this lesson?
- If no reply, pause at least 5 seconds.
 - If still no reply, continue: "You know in every lesson, the teacher has some idea about what the students should learn, right? [pause for affirmation]"
 - So, what about this lesson? What do you think the teacher wanted you to learn?
- 8) Ask: What did you **like best** about this lesson?
- If the student has no trouble answering and seems to be speaking freely, continue with questions.
 - If the student is hesitant or has little to say, show another segment of the video. Again, choose a segment that has a QtA query and ideally has some student interaction.
- 9) Ask: Do you remember when the teacher asked, "___" (State a specific QtA query that was used in the lesson, ideally the one from the video excerpt that was viewed.) **Why do you think the teacher asked that?**
- If the student does not reply, says 'don't know' or gives another minimal response, prompt the student further. For example
 - Hmm, you don't know? Don't you think the teacher usually has a reason for asking questions? What could be the teacher's reason for asking this question? (repeat the query if needed)
 - Let's think – teachers always ask a lot of questions, don't they? So, why do you think she/he asked THIS question?
- 10) Ask: Do you think this lesson was different from other reading lessons with this teacher? If yes, in what way? If not, what are reading lessons usually like?
- 11) Ask: Since you were reading in this lesson, let's think about reading a little bit: When you read, do you think about who the author is? Do you think about what the author is trying to tell you?
- 12) Ask: I'd like to know your opinion. In your opinion, does it help if you think about who the author is and what the author is trying to tell you? Or is that not important? **Why or why not?**
- 13) Ask: Last question, For you, what is easy/difficult about reading?

14) Ask: Is there anything you want to ask me?

Be sure to thank the student: THANK YOU! 😊

Additional notes for the interviewer:

In general, if the student does not reply, replies minimally or says 'don't know', you can prompt further with open questions such as "Can you tell me more about that?" "Can you tell me more?" However, you must be very careful that you do not suggest ideas or lead the student to answer with the types of comments you hope to hear.

Notes on scheduling

Student interviews would ideally take place 1-2 days after the observed lesson.

The interviewer should be the researcher who observed the lesson so she will be familiar to the student.

Each interview will take approx 30-40 minutes.

Rationale for the questions:

As above, questions 1-5 are intended to help the student remember the lesson/ ascertain if the student does remember the lesson.

Question 1 is a general question to see if the student reports that he/she remembers the lesson. The initial slides from the lesson (assuming the teacher uses ppt) or handout, etc. is intended to refresh the student's memory. This would usually be the slide or an image showing the title of the story as it is likely that students will remember the story read.

Question 2 goes into more detail to help the student remember the lesson/ ascertain if the student does remember the lesson. A variety of options are offered, some accurate and some inaccurate (ie, all of these lessons would involve reading, few if any of them would involve writing). **It is very important to offer all of these options to the student in order to avoid eliciting an expected response.** Inaccurate student responses might indicate that the student does not remember the lesson or does not remember it well. Different student responses to questions about 'reading', 'discussion', etc might also indicate what the student noticed/remembers about the lesson.

Question 3 is a more open-ended question addressing the same issues as questions 1 and 2 – what, if anything, does the student remember about the lesson. Hopefully at question 3 the student would start to give more spontaneous answers. In this way, questions 1-3 also act as a 'warm up' for the interview.

Question 4 makes use of the video to stimulate the student's memory. However, the student might be more focused on finding himself/herself in the image or looking for friends, rather than 'seeing the lesson'. With this in mind, it is best to give the student time to become familiar with the image, to find himself/herself, to identify friends. Therefore, question 4 explicitly directs the student to these personal items before moving on to question 5 which addresses the lesson.

Question 5 follow-up on the video view for question 4 to ask if the student remembers any other details from the lesson.

Question 6 moves into Part 2 of the interview. In this part of the interview, the goal is to find out if the student noticed anything about QtA and/or the classroom interaction. Question 6 shows a teacher-fronted segment with the teacher using a QtA query. Given the quality of the audio, it is likely that the student will not hear exactly what is said. The interviewer should NOT re-state what the teacher said as this could encourage the student to comment on that whether or not the student had any ideas about it. Instead, the interviewer should play the segment once and then ask “Do you want to see it again?” If yes, play the segment up to 3 times. There are no specific questions to ask at this point – simply let the student comment (if any).

Although the interviewer does not specifically mention the video, *question 7* follows up on question 6 as the student might reference (or remember) the excerpted part of the lesson in replying. The interviewer should NOT ask specifically about the video or the teacher comment; instead allow the student to comment on what he/she thinks the teacher wanted students to learn. Note also that this question is not about what the student did learn, but what the student thinks the teacher wanted him/her to learn.

Question 8 attempts to elicit more affective information about what the student liked (or did not like if the student chooses to answer in that way) about the lesson. Following the protocol, if the student is not forthcoming with answers, a second video excerpt should be shown. This should also be an excerpt in which the teacher uses a QtA query.)

Question 9 specifically asks about the teacher’s use of QtA query. For this question, the interviewer must re-state one of the teacher queries. This should be a query used in the video excerpt shown (either at question 6 or 8). The same video clip can also be re-shown if the student does not remember this teacher query. The crucial part of question 9 is “Why do you think the teacher asked you that?”

Question 10 still offers the opportunity for the student to comment on QtA but it is more oblique -- asking for a comparison with other lessons. This also broadens the scope of the interview, moving into Part 3 which addresses reading lessons and reading more broadly.

Question 11 addresses the idea of reading and the reader-author relationship to try to elicit comments from students about their thinking in relation to reading and reading processes.

Question 12 follows up on question 11 to elicit the student’s ideas about whether thinking about the author (or reading-author relationship) is important for reading comprehension.

Question 13 gives the student an opportunity to comment on his/her reading difficulties, if any.

Question 14 is an opportunity for the student to ask any question before the interview closes.

Be sure to thank the student for his/her time and participation.

References

Bahn, S. & Barratt-Pugh, L. Getting reticent young males to talk: Using artefact-mediated interviews to promote discursive interaction. *Qualitative Social Work*, 0 (00), 1-14. Online First version published at <http://qsw.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/09/28/1473325011420501>. DOI: 10.1177/1473325011420501

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Student Assent Form
CRC Project / Student Interview

As part of our research project, we want to ask you a few questions about your English lesson.

1. Do you agree to talk to the researcher about your lesson?



Yes



No

2. Do you agree we can record the interview



Yes



No

Your Name: _____

Class: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Date: _____