

Mother Tongue, Finnish

Kirsi Urmson

3rd grade 2017, 4th grade 2018

The content aim: To be able to use correct punctuation when writing direct speech in stories.

To learn to study different types of sentences and apply correct punctuation rules in their own writing.

The thinking aim: To notice that punctuation makes a difference in understanding texts.

To collect banks and use readymade banks for analyzing punctuation.

To make rules for punctuation of direct speech by using banks (texts from children's stories)

To understand that learning takes several steps.

P1: The pupils wrote a short dialogue using a picture. They were also asked to write at least two sentences where there is no speech. The teacher wanted to see if the pupils notice any difference when they write. There was a question about punctuation to show them the aim of this writing task.

P2: The pupils were given a task to look at the little story they had written. They had to mark with a coloured pencil the ways they had marked the direct speech. Next stage was to try to think of a rule. How did I punctuate the speech? They were also asked to think of ways of learning more about punctuation. One of the ways they suggested was books.

P3: The pupils were given a pile of story books. They were to find direct speech. They used an iPad for taking pictures of sentences. After this they wrote the sentences of direct speech on the work sheet. Some of them ignored the punctuation and only wrote direct speech, what people said. The teacher tried to draw their attention on the idea of actually seeing what part in the text is somebody's speech. How does it separate from the text?

Collecting sentences from the books was too challenging for 3rd graders.

P4: The pupils were asked to look at the rules they had done before and write new rules about punctuating direct speech. Rules meant at this stage example sentences with the punctuation.

4th grade 2017

P5: There was a diagnostic writing test. The pupils had to write a short dialogue they heard from the teacher. The aim was to see how they use punctuation in direct speech. The direct speech was punctuated quite well but there was still need for a rule to punctuate the reporting expression.

P6: The pupils got a task to write lines for the characters in a situation. They were asked to write the lines in bubbles first and then as text. The problem was to think, how does the reader know which is speech.

P7: The pupils were given three samples of texts to find speech in them and compare them with their own text. How would they write exact rules for punctuating direct speech? There was also a task to evaluate the rules by a friend. A new text with the rules the friend has written was supposed to be produced. The class didn't have time for this task at that stage.

4th grade 2018

P8: Since the reporting expression seemed to be problematic, the next task was pure speech without telling who says what. The teacher got a short dialogue from a book and removed the reporting expressions. The

pupils found a problem: they didn't know who is speaking or how many people were speaking and that made understanding problematic.

P9: The pupils were given a diagnostic test. They had to write and punctuate a text the teacher read to them. More attention was paid by the pupils and they were separating the speech from the speaker. The punctuation was still difficult.

P10: The teacher collected all the different ways of punctuation from the pupils' papers. The teacher pointed out that the pupils didn't have a common rule yet about punctuation. There were nearly as many ways as there were pupils. The teacher asked them to find those 1-2 sentences which looked right. They had to find from their previous or two new texts (banks) a piece that supported their choice as a correct way of punctuation.

Next task to follow

P11: For the final making of the rule the class will find the elements of punctuation and make a general rule which they will test with the use of the text bank they have.