

Visual Imagery

Philippine's letters written while she traveled up the Mississippi River on the Franklin steamboat are gushing with detailed descriptions of her new surroundings. She vividly describes the landscape they pass by, people they encounter and life on the steamboat. On this last leg of her journey, Philippine's writing is energized with descriptions of a whole new world of plants and animals and exotic beauty she witnesses on the river shore. This is a unique opportunity for your students to experience Philippine's excitement and visualize the banks of the Mississippi River through the fresh eyes of an immigrant!

Below are ideas for practicing **visual imagery** with your class:

1. *Traveling the Mississippi* Power Point (see Student Documents and Activities column) activity:

- Prior to showing Lesson 5 power point to your class, make a paper copy of the slideshow and CUT OUT the paragraphs.
- Ask students to close their eyes in preparation for hearing the descriptions.
- Ask them to try and visualize the descriptions being read as you read each of the paragraphs aloud.
- Now hand a paragraph to each student (you may need multiple copies depending on your class size). Instruct students to reread the paragraph and circle descriptive words and phrases.
- Next, ask students to sketch or draw the scene in their paragraph. Have them focus more on adding all the details they "see" in their mind and less attention on neatness.
- Set a timer, giving students 2 minutes to share their paragraph and picture with another student. Repeat twice.
- Now watch the power point slide show as a class. Students can compare and contrast their visualizations with the illustrations used in the slideshow.

2. *Primary Source* activity (see Student Documents and Activities column):

- Read aloud or have students read the Primary Source document. Follow your classroom's typical close reading instructions.
- Once initial notes and questions have been added to the document, have students reread and highlight or circle all the descriptive imagery words and phrases.
- Have each student choose a descriptive scene (ex: hanging moss on live oak trees) that is most compelling to him/her.
- Using a variety of mediums (colored pencils, chalk, pen, pencil, etc.) have students create an image of their chosen description and add the paragraph somewhere on the picture.
- Ask students if they have heard the phrase, "A picture is worth a thousand words." After completing the activity, do they agree or disagree?

3. Peruse the resources listed below for visual imagery instruction ideas. Modify by using the descriptive narratives given in Philippine's letters and excerpts found in the Lesson 5 Primary Source.

<http://readingstrategiesjonathanolson.weebly.com/visual-imagery.html>

http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/visual_imagery

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/mind-pictures-strategies-that-792.html?tab=4#tab>

http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/profdev/profdev094.shtml