

Variants:

- Students select for the posted beginning sentences one that they like best and invent their own story based on it. Their invented stories will then be compared with the real texts.
- The students select the last sentences from different books and other texts, and then try to develop hypotheses from the end about the content or the origin of the text, based on the last sentences (from which book...).
- The following exercise #7 (developing hypotheses) is a good expansion step.

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Developing hypotheses

Goal

An important motivational factor in reading books of fiction is the fact that the plot can be compared with one's own expectations and assumptions. A person's assumptions may thus be confirmed or turn out to be false. This exercise sharpens the students' awareness for formulating hypotheses and semantic expectations.

2nd–9th grade

25–45 minutes



Materials:
Different books
(previously prepared by
the instructor)

Procedure:

- The students read in teams of two the beginning (e.g., the first chapter or the first page) of a story. The material can also be read or told in part or its entirety to younger and weaker readers (teams of younger and older students can also be formed for this purpose). Depending on the make-up of the class, different books can be suggested for this idea (tailored according to age, gender, and interest).
- After that, the teams of two discuss and list their hypotheses about the further developments (how the story could continue, what would be exciting, creepy, funny, etc.?)
- The teams present their hypotheses in class. Someone who knows the book, or the story, reacts and reports how the text actually continues. If no one in the class has already read the text or the book, the students review their hypotheses themselves. They read the book and compare their suppositions about the development of the story with the original.

Comments:

For a good and simple preliminary exercise, see Exercise #6 (The first sentences).

Alternatives:

- If all or several groups have read the same first chapter, they engage in a debate: Which hypothesis is the most likely, and why?
- This exercise is also suitable as a lead-in to a collective reading. The beginning of this material is read aloud; all students write down their hypotheses for the text. These will then be hidden in a treasure chest. At the end of the communal reading, the class checks if one of the hypotheses was correct.