Grade: 2nd
Strategy: Questioning
Technique: Teacher Generated Questions
Text Type: Fiction

At the Bottom of the Sea

Aims of the lesson:

- Encourage deeper critical thinking about the text.
- Foster connections between specific details and overarching themes or ideas.
- Provide a structured, teacher-guided framework to direct understanding and manage the complexity of analysis.
- Develop students' ability to differentiate between:
  - Thin questions: Focused on the text's content, prompting straightforward, close-ended answers.
  - Thick questions: Designed to stimulate deeper thinking, discussions, and complex open-ended responses.

One morning, Mia woke up feeling something strange in her feet. When she looked down, she discovered she had a shiny mermaid tail instead of legs! "How exciting!" Mia thought. But soon she realized she couldn't walk. So, she crawled to the phone to call her best friend, Jake.

"Jake, come to my house quickly! It's an emergency!" said Mia.

Jake lived next door, so he arrived in no time.

"Wow, Mia! You have a mermaid tail!" said Jake, surprised.

"Yes! Do you want to explore the ocean together?" asked Mia, excited.

Jake brought his diving gear and a wheelbarrow. He filled the wheelbarrow with water so Mia could stay comfortable, and they went to the beach together.

When they arrived, Mia and Jake jumped into the water. Although Jake couldn't swim as fast as Mia, she helped him, and together they reached a deep part of the ocean where Mr. Octopus lived.

"What a surprise! A mermaid and her diver friend," said Mr. Octopus. "Come with me! I'll show you how to swim faster."

While exploring, Mia and Jake saw something that made them very sad: the water was full of trash!

"Oh no! This is terrible!" said Mia.
"We have to help clean the ocean," said Jake.

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Mr. Octopus took them to Queen Mermaid, who was very worried.

“The ocean is full of trash, and it’s harming the animals that live here,” Queen Mermaid explained. “Can you help us?”

“Of course!” Mia and Jake replied.

They came up with a great idea: they would collect the trash and take it to the beach. There, they would put up a sign that said, “If you don’t want trash in your home, don’t throw it in mine.”

Jake made the sign with drawings of fish, seahorses, and seaweed. Then, they asked more people to help clean up the trash. Little by little, more friends joined their mission.

As a reward for their hard work, Queen Mermaid gave Mia and Jake a special gift: they could switch between legs and a mermaid tail whenever they wanted! Since then, Mia and Jake have continued helping the ocean. They know it will take time to clean it all, but with everyone’s help, they’ll succeed!

And you? Will you help take care of the rivers, seas, and oceans?

Process phase 1: Planning (Teachers’ perspective)

During this stage, the teacher has planned and prepared **questions** aligned with the "Teacher Generated Questions" technique:

Thin questions (e.g.):

- What happened to Mia when she woke up?
- Who did Mia call for help?
- What did Jake bring to help Mia get to the beach?
- …

Thick questions (e.g.):

- Why do you think it’s important to keep the ocean clean?
- How does the story show teamwork?
- What lessons can we learn from Mia and Jake’s actions?
- …

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Materials such as **visual aids** (images of oceans, sea creatures, and trash pollution) and the sign created by Mia and Jake for added engagement.

Cognitive stage 1: Pre-reading (Students' perspective)
Students are introduced to the topic by discussing questions like:

- Have you ever been to the ocean? What did you see there?
- What kinds of things might you see at the bottom of the sea?
- Have you ever seen trash in the water? How did it make you feel?
- Why do you think people throw trash in the ocean?
- If you found trash at the beach, what would you do?
- Why do you think it's important to keep the oceans clean?

Students make predictions about the story based on the title. Visual aids are used to spark interest and activate prior knowledge.

Process phase 2: Teaching (Teachers' perspective)

The teacher reads the story aloud or guides students in reading it independently. Strategic pauses are made to ask thin questions to ensure understanding (e.g., "Who did Mia meet in the ocean?" or "What did Mia and Jake decide to do about the trash?").

Cognitive Stage 2: During the Reading (Students' Perspective)
Students engage with the text by answering thin questions and **noting key details**. They **discuss in pairs or small groups** when posed thick questions, reflecting on the story's themes and making connections to real-life issues. Students are encouraged to **visualize scenes or imagine** being part of Mia and Jake's mission.

Process phase 3: Feedback (Teachers' perspective)

The teacher supports students' work by acknowledging their answers and clarifying misconceptions. A guided discussion is facilitated around thick questions to inspire critical thinking.

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Cognitive stage 3: Post reading (Students' perspective)

Students reflect on the story's message by **answering questions** like:

- What can we do to help the environment, like Mia and Jake?
- How do you think the animals in the ocean felt before and after Mia and Jake helped?
- What would happen if no one helped clean the ocean?
- Can you think of other ways, besides cleaning, to protect the oceans and the creatures that live there?
- How do teamwork and creativity solve problems in real life?

As a creative activity, students **design their own posters** with messages encouraging others to keep the oceans clean.

Ways of Communication:

- **Interpretive (receptive)** - students read the text and determine the relevant qualities of the characters.
- **Interpersonal (mixed)** - students work in groups and advise each other on the correct connection of the table.
- **Presentational (productive)** – the groups present to the class the answers they have indicated.

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