

TRUISM RETEACH LESSONS

Analysis work can be mentally daunting for kids at first. Unlike, say, mathematics, the work isn't often concrete and needs to be backed up with evidence and explanation. We are attempting to take the work of analysis and break it down into its simplest parts for our students to follow.

With that said, while some students may get truisms instinctively, while others will struggle with composing truisms accurately. The only way to improve is to constantly practice, model your thinking, and praise the work in each phase. However, you may still need to have focused reteaching depending on the issues that you see arise.

If your students are having a hard time writing truisms for stories:

Don't be afraid to take a step back to photos and art! Pull photos from National Geographic Photo of the Day, Guardian's and The Atlantic's Photo of the Week, Time Magazine's 100 Photos, Unsplash.com, and the art of Pawel Kuczynski, Banksy, and others. Choose photos or art that are visually intriguing and will cause a response.



Let's analyze this photo:

What on-the-line things can you point out?

- Debris
- Broken house
- Scattered tree limbs
- Broken wood

Then go through the big ideas identification step.

Possible Big Ideas:

- Devastation
- Destruction
- Loss
- Tragedy
- The harshness of nature

Once you've identified some big ideas, have students back it up with evidence. "How do you know that **the harshness of nature** is a big idea in this photo?" Continue to model this identifying and evidence process until it sinks in.

If your students are having a hard time with composing intriguing, well-crafted truisms:

Use the Truism Sentence Frame. Show them a picture, identify big ideas, and then use the frame to help compose an intriguing truism. As always, it's a good idea to model first!

TRUISM SENTENCE FRAME		
BIG IDEA +	is/is not does/does not will/will not can/cannot should/should not might/might not may/may not Requires Personifying Verbs (hides, shouts, etc) Other Strong Verbs	+ TRUTH the Author Believes About the Big Idea

Let's analyze this photo.



On-the-line noticings:

Mom, children, cell phone, mom has focused look on her face

Big Ideas:

technology, distractions, family, motherhood, childhood,

Truism Using the Frame:

(Big Idea) (can be) (truth)

Technology can be a **distraction from the business of life.**

Back it Up:

In the photo, the mom is ignoring her children and is only focusing on her phone to distract herself from her motherly responsibilities.

If your students are composing basic truisms but you want them to write more refined truisms:

Introduce your students to the Levels of Truisms and have them identify where a truism they've written falls on the scale.

Level One: These go against our definition of truisms; basically, a non-truism, description, or command.

Ex. Be a true friend.

Level Two: These truisms are clichéd, expected, and not surprising to us as readers.

Ex. Friendship is important in life.

Level Three: These are truisms that stay with us, make us think, and surprise us as readers. Think of these like clickbait truisms.

Ex. Sometimes, the person that's not around is the most important.

To write level three truisms, use the truisms sentence frame to help compose these.

For some, getting our students at a level two is a win. However, keep pushing your kids to write with more craft by encouraging them to judge on their own and using the truism sentence frame.