

# Massaging Texts

## Massaging a Text

A “text” here is understood as a spoken text. For example, a picture description or account of yesterday’s activities, or an explanation of a cultural rite, if they are captured on tape, are examples of texts. It could also be a written story or other written material that is read aloud.

## Massaging a text in general:

Note: During this process, the Nurturer is speaking on the tape.

Step 1. Acquire the text (easy example: a picture description; medium example: a familiar story or story to accompany a picture book; challenging example: a description of a cultural rite, an excerpt from a life story).

Step 2. Go over it monolingually in the target language, a sentence at a time, ‘negotiating meanings’ that you don’t understand, and making brief notes as appropriate. This generates good conversational interaction. You can note down new vocabulary and other details that will help in subsequent listening.

Step 3. Later use the notes you made as necessary, in order to listen again with comprehension. Each time you listen you should need the notes less than before. Listen to it until you no longer need to refer to the notes. (Typically three or four listenings.) Listen again periodically to keep what you learned alive in your brain.

## Picture Descriptions

In the case of a picture descriptions, you can get started in the following manner.:

Step 1. Ask the language helper to describe everything happening in the picture. Tape-record him or her as s/he does it (she should not practice and plan in detail what s/he will say!).

Step 2. Rewind to the beginning, and play back a sentence at a time, with the page before you. This will be your monolingual time. And it is important that you not fall back on your contact language at all until the debriefing.

Step 3. After the helper has gone, do the repeated listenings as described above

## Pitfalls

In making notes, don’t write translations of every sentence, and generally, don’t write notes about anything that you already understand (as many are wont to do). Try to understand without feeling

compelled to translate. The notes should be the minimum necessary for using the text as a comprehension text that stands largely on its own.

Later on, if you want to transcribe the text in written form for reading practice, pay a native speaker to do the transcribing. Transcribing is a tedious activity for a learner, and not terribly profitable. In any case, the strategy is aimed at using the text as a “listening text”. It can become part of a collection of listening texts that you are compiling.

## **Additional Activities with Story:**

Repeat the story, but use different activities to repeat the language

1. Use story
2. Use stickers
3. Use Legos or Cuisinaire rods
4. Act it out
5. Use a flannel board