

Literacy Quest 1: One-On-One Reading

Throughout the semester there has been one student who I have helped several times with reading passages and questions related to the passages. I believe that this student is capable of reading and answering questions independently, but he has serious behavioral and focusing problems, which keeps him from completing his work. Whenever I first sit down with him, it requires a lot of patience on my end to get him to focus, read, and do the work. I find it most effective if I begin reading first, pointing to each word as I read and making him follow along, and then he gradually becomes more independent and focused. This particular student will try to pretend like he does not know what to do or that something is too hard, but I know that he is just being lazy and usually is capable of doing the work. I have also noticed that this student receives very little praise for anything, and the only attention he does ever get in class is being yelled at. When working one-on-one with this student, I make sure to give him really positive verbal praise when he does complete an answer or reads something, and I can see that it really does make a difference in his attitude and motivation. I can honestly see it in his face that he is proud when I praise him for something and he does continue to work with self-motivation. I have seen the teacher and other staff members in the building scream at this student to read, or do his work, and it is always extremely ineffective and painful to watch because it is clear that the more they yell the less likely he is going to obey, which results in a big scene in the classroom. This is really sad to me because I know this student is smart (he is obviously playing the teacher and staff to get out of doing work, and I have witnessed him read and answer things by himself),

but everyone in the classroom at this point has labeled this student as a “bad” student and has set the expectations as really low, so therefore, the student has low expectations for himself and is not even motivated to try. Hopefully in the future, this student has a teacher who recognizes and praises his talents and ignores, or properly manages his misbehavior of not trying.

Literacy Quest 2: Whole Class: Reading Lesson

I did a whole class reading lesson over character characters’ points of view in a story. I read the story, Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day to the class one time through and prior to reading the story I told the students to try and put themselves in the shoes of the characters in the story. After reading the story once I told the students that when we imagine what a character is thinking outside of what the story tells us, it is called subtext. We then read the story again stopping at each page to identify the characters on the page and act out the subtext of each character. For each page there was a notecard with the name of each character on that specific page and students took turn acting out the dialogue of that character. The students had to create their own original dialogue based off of how that character looked in the pictures of the story, or what they knew about that character from what was written in the story.

The students were really excited and eager to participate in this activity because they got to stand in front of the whole class and be assigned to act out a character. At first, they had a difficult time understanding that they were supposed to talk as if the character and making up something original to say. They wanted to

say things like, “Alexander is feeling mad, “ or, “Nick is like ha-ha I’m better,” instead of actually creating their own dialogue, and acting out the dialogue as that character. They eventually started to catch on and they really seemed to understand the different character points of view. The next steps for this lesson would be for the students to reflect and write their text-to-self connections with this particular story, and to practice this comprehension strategy with all stories they read.

Literacy Quest 3: Small Group Comprehension Lesson

One day for a success lesson I did a lesson over cause and effect in a story. As a group we read the story, *The Snowy Day*. After reading the story, the students were given sentences from events in the story and had to put them in the correct order as they happened in the story. After they correctly put them in order they were given another set of sentences from the story that they were going to have to put next to each event as the effect of the event, or cause, from the story. We went back through and read the story slowly and when we came to an event or cause, the students picked the sentence that was the effect from that event and placed it next to the it. Once we finished rereading the story and correctly identifying all the causes and effects in the right order, the students then glued the sentences to a piece of paper in the same order. Many of the students had heard this story before, so the first time I read the story, a lot of them knew and would say before I read the page, what was going to happen next. However, when it came to arranging the sentences in the right order, many students actually found this to be a difficult task. Although there were about 7 events and 7 effects, for a total of 14 sentence strips, I still think that the

students had a difficult time with reading all of the words on the sentences to figure out where they go. If the students would have had pictures to go along with the sentences then they might have completed this task a lot more quickly. Students worked together to help each other order and match the sentences. Because students were predicting and also identifying what the outcomes of certain events in the story was, I think that they do have a pretty good understanding of cause and effect in a story, but got a little caught up and overwhelmed when reading all of the sentence strips.

Literacy Quest 4 - Your Choice: Lesson Plan Reflection

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Lesson Reflection

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On Wednesday I taught my first lesson during Success time. The lesson topic was for the English Language Arts skill of determining and understanding the meaning of words by using the context of other words in the sentence as clues. The students in the group were considered to be the below level learners. I was really nervous before and during my lesson, especially at the very beginning. I think I planned a decent motivation for the lesson, but I completely failed at teaching the motivational piece. Reflecting back on it now, I can barely remember what I actually did end up doing for the students as the motivation because that's how nervous I was. I do remember them reading the sentence aloud as I struggled to write it on the

Smartboard, which I remember being kind of fun, but I don't think they got the connection of my motivation to the lesson. The guided practice ended up taking the entire lesson, so I was not able to get to the more independent practice. I don't think the guided practice idea was necessarily a bad one, but because it did end up taking so long it didn't keep all the students engaged. I think that if I would have started the lesson off better and modeled and explained what we were doing, then the guided practice of filling in the missing blanks would have gone much quicker. I did notice however, that every student was able to fill in the missing words, and at one point or another every student participated, but then again, this lesson was just review for a concept they have already learned. I feel as though I had good interactions with the students during the lesson, especially since I did not know over half the students in the group because they came from other 2nd grade classrooms. I struggled with creating an engaging, 30-minute lesson and activity for this skill that was to be taught to students I didn't know. Even though the instruction was bad, it was a good learning experience for me to grow as a professional, and next time I will be a little less unsure of myself, and a little more confident and comfortable as the instructor. I am excited to teach more lessons throughout the semester because I know that each time I will become increasingly more comfortable in the role of the teacher. Other than my EDEL 200 class five semesters ago, I have nearly no experience being in the teaching role. I have been so used to being the student my whole life, so transitioning to the other side is not easy.

Literacy Quest 5: Observe whole class literacy lesson given by teacher

I observed my teacher give a literacy lesson over a nonfiction text in the basal reader about rocks and minerals. In the lesson the students first listened to an audio recording of the text and followed along. This really was not engaging for the students at all, and very few students were actually following along with the story as it was being read. I walked around and tried to make sure the students were on the page that was being read and not flipping to other pages in the basal textbook, but it was obvious that they did not enjoy the audio of the text. After the text was finished being read, the teacher then asked the students to share a fact they learned from the story. There were a few students who raised their hand and shared something. The teacher then guided the students through questions in the basal that were listed after the text, which students also had a difficult time participating in. The teacher then had a rock collection that she passed around and the students were interested in that, even though it wasn't tied to any of the instruction other than the topic of rocks and the students did find the rocks to be cool. I think that this was a good idea to have the students pass around different kinds of rocks, but something I learned by observing this lesson that I might do differently in the future would be to pass the rocks around before reading, or listening, to the text to get the students motivated and to get their attention, and then do the story.

Literacy Quest 6: Read and Share

Article: Teaching Reading Comprehension: Using Mosaic of Thought and Reader's Workshop by Beth Lewis

<http://k6educators.about.com/cs/languagearts/a/teachreading.htm>

- We should teach students to comprehend books in a manner that is consistent with how they will read and comprehend as adults, not by completing worksheets.
- Don't depend on small reading groups, and instead blend whole group instruction, small group instruction, and individual instruction
- Focus on 1 out of the 7 reading comprehension strategies for 6-10 weeks
- Have hour long sessions for the strategy
- Begin by presenting a 15-20 minute long mini lesson the models the strategy for a certain book and thinking aloud to demonstrate the strategy and teach students how good readers read
- Give the students an assignment for the day where they use the strategy in their own book
- After doing a mini lesson, meet with small needs-based groups and also guided reading groups for 15 minutes
- For 20 minutes meet one-on-one with students, trying to get to 4-5 students a day. Have the students demonstrate to you exactly how they are using the strategy as they read
- For 15-20 minutes meet again as a whole class to wrap up and review learning.

Literacy Quest 7: Observe a literacy assessment given by teacher

On my teacher's classroom iPad, there is a reading assessment program that keeps track of the students' reading development. It is very similar to the typical reading passages and running records that are done with paper and pencil, but it is a little easier and quicker to make a note of something because you can insert the different symbols with one touch on the iPad. The students still read from a book, but the text from that book is on the iPad for the teacher to see and make the notes. After reading the story, questions for comprehension come up on the screen of the iPad for the teacher to ask the student and then also grade them on a level of 1-4. I have personally practiced doing running records on paper, and one thing I find difficult while doing these on paper is writing fast enough to catch any miscues or

notable habits the student has made while reading, so the iPad would be helpful in that aspect. I did not like, however, how the teacher did not record the students' answers to any of the questions, nor were any notes made during the students' reading about something that wasn't necessarily a miscue, but definitely something to take note of. I feel like it would be very easy for the teacher to say the student is successful at a particular reading level and ready to move on when in reality they probably need more practice.

Literacy Quest 8 – Read aloud: Social Studies Connect

I read the book, Timeless Thomas: How Thomas Edison Changed Our Lives by Gene Barretta, aloud to my class of second grade students. This nonfiction book is about Thomas Edison and his many inventions that are still used today. Text and illustrations of items used by people in present day are included throughout the book as well as pages of Edison's Lab in the past, which is where the inventions for the present day items were first invented. Students had some prior knowledge about who Thomas Edison was and what some of his inventions were, but the book definitely helped confirm what they thought they knew and also supplied them with a lot more information that they did not know before. Most of the students seemed to enjoy the book and afterwards they wrote a newspaper article about Thomas Jefferson's invention of the light bulb as if they were a newspaper writer during the actual time period of his invention. Most students seemed to enjoy the read aloud and activity, and also I believe it helped them to deepen their understandings about past, present, and future. One student even used his prior knowledge about another

inventor, Benjamin Franklin, to connect with Thomas Edison's invention of the light bulb, and Franklin's discovery of electricity, which I then explained the difference between the two terms to the class. After students wrote their articles, they took turns reading them to the class, which was really fun for both the students and me. Reading their writing aloud also helped to improve the fluency and provoked even deeper meaning to the topic as they listened to the original work of their peers.