

Helmsley ELA Lesson

December 5, 2013

Mrs. Allison Scurr

Owen Elementary School

5th Grade Room 130

Classroom Demographics:

- 23 regular education students
- 12 boys and 11 girls
- 2 IEP's and 1 504 Plan
- No ELL students
- 5 Project Arrow (academically talented) students
- 6 students that participate in a reading intervention program to boost comprehension and fluency

Lesson Focus:

- RI.5.5 Compare and contrast the overall structure of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.
- RI.5.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

Topic and Text:

- During our literacy time we will be focusing on comparing and contrasting similar informational articles about scientific breakthroughs. Students will have read at least one of the articles previously so that only a brief re-reading or skim will be required during the video lesson. This lesson and other similar RI.5.5 lessons will help to prepare students for the Reading Informational Text Integration of Knowledge and Ideas standards which I plan to address in the future with more than two articles on the same topic.
- I am using "The Mystery of the Messy Desk" (about Alexander Fleming) and "The Speckled Monster" (about the smallpox vaccine) which are both reproducible nonfiction articles from the Scholastic book Nonfiction Comprehension Cliffhangers for Grades 4-8 by Tom Conklin.

Lesson Materials and Set Up:

- Students will have copies of both articles. Extras will be available, if needed.
- Coding reference cards will be available at groups, if the kids need reminders.
- Turn and Talk cards for each student will be passed out.
- Large poster paper for each child (2 pre-created organizers will be available as

modifications.)

- Visual display of "Adventures Across Texts" graphic organizer and expectations will be visible.
- Extra coloring materials will be available if needed.
- White folding paper will be available for early finisher's Non-fiction Fortune Tellers.

Lesson Modifications:

- One of my students has some difficulty with handwriting and he often uses a laptop to record his ideas. I will offer him this option. I will also have a pre-created organizer for him to use if he prefers to write his ideas down. He can also ask a peer or me to scribe for him.
- One of my students has difficulty with partner work, work completion, regulating his voice level and verbal sounds, and managing stress or apprehension. I will use proximity to help keep this student at ease. Prompts will be provided for him so he's able to participate in group conversations. A pre-created organizer will be given to him, noting in highlighted marker what the expectations are for him.
- The graphic organizer that the students will work on is tiered intentionally. All students are expected to complete the contrasting and comparing sections, however I do have one student who may only complete the contrasting articles section. (He is mentioned above.) My hope is that most students (definitely my academically talented students) will attempt the vocabulary section and, ultimately, the big idea section. I plan to encourage all kids who are ready to move on, to give these portions a try.

Lesson:

- 5-10 min Students will have read and coded "The Speckled Monster" previously. Students will get out "The Mystery of the Messy Desk" article and go through a quiet re-read or skim and code while they read to check their understanding and activate their thinking.
- 10 min After re-reading and coding the second article, students will do a Turn and Talk at their group table to articulate their thinking while reading and help with retention. I will provide some prompt question cards to get the conversations going at each group.
- 5-10 min Whole group sharing and discussion of Turn and Talk questions

-How many of you came across some vocabulary terms that you were unfamiliar with? How did you figure out the meaning of the challenging or new words? Examples?

-There are certain terms that are repeated many times in the articles. ("inoculate", "immune", and "vaccine") Why do you think the writer repeats these terms over and over rather than varying the word choice?

-Why do you think a disease is referred to as a "monster"? Why did the author do this? Examples?

- What background do you already have about smallpox? (There are at least 2 curricular connections mentioned in the article.)
- Why do you think the author shared that Alexander Fleming spent much of his time outside in nature? Why would this detail be important in this article?
- How do you know when your immune system is failing?
- How can "accidents" be useful in science? Reference book "Accidents that Worked".
- What's the difference between a virus and a bacteria?
- What might our world be like if Alexander Fleming and Edward Jenner hadn't studied the immune system and made their discoveries?

20-25 min- Students will be given large sheets of paper on which they will create a map of similarities and differences between the articles, as well as noting key vocabulary and important big ideas. We have used Venn Diagrams repeatedly, so I am opting to use a different idea organizer for this particular lesson display called "Adventures Across Texts". I am going to project or display a sample organizer for the children to copy onto their large papers. Students will work individually using their two articles and their notes/coding marks to compare and contrast the articles. Students can use words or pictures to share their ideas, as long as they are able to speak thoughtfully about their work.

- 5-10 min Whole group closure-If some students still need more time to complete their graphic organizer poster, others can begin to make a non-fiction origami fortune teller using key terms and concepts from the articles. (These are very popular with the kids right now!)
- If students are finished with task, selected students will share with the class or students will share at their group tables.
- What commonalities or similarities do you notice among your peers' graphic organizers?

Reflection:

- I believe that many Core Action indicators will be visible in this lesson. All of Core Action 1 will be present. The articles' length, complexity, and topic should challenge all of my students, as well as the lesson activities they will be using the articles for. The lesson includes reading, speaking, writing, and listening to others, all in relation to the two articles. The non-fiction pieces are written in a narrative manner and are high-interest due to the cliffhanger endings. Since both pieces are lengthy, I think this text format will be most conducive to maintaining student interest and perseverance.
- Core Action 2 Indicators should all be evident as well. In order to effectively compare and contrast the two selections, students will have to go back into the texts and pull out specific examples to illustrate their thinking. To fully demonstrate understanding, students

will have to grapple with and understand new vocabulary terms related to the ideas in the reading. Group conversation, whole group discussion, and the individual graphic organizer task all require the students to use higher-order thinking skills such as synthesizing, comparing and contrasting, evaluating, and judging. Very few, if any, questions ask for one word or recall-type answers.

- Core Action 3 indicators are part of all lesson areas. By asking students to code or annotate while they read, talk with peers, share with the group, work individually, and write or draw their thinking, conditions have been created for all students to succeed by varying the expectations for demonstrating understanding. The Turn and Talk cards provide the element of accountability, so all students have a concrete reminder of what the participation expectations are. I'm anticipating certain modifications will need to be made for a couple of my students and I'll have them ready, when appropriate for the student. While the children are working individually, I'll be able to circulate and check in with each child about their thinking and ensure they are working to their potential. This may require probing, prompting, or challenging their thinking.

What You Should Know About My Lesson and Classroom:

- In my classroom, I often allow the kids to work independently while spreading out around the room. They may work on the floor, at tables, or wherever they can be productive and comfortable.
- I often play soothing music while the students work individually.
- I offer study carols for students that want to minimize distractions.
- I'm anticipating that one of my students, who would be most likely to "throw me a curve ball", or act in an unanticipated manner, should be fine during this lesson. However, if he is visibly struggling, I may offer him a break, a stress-relief tool, or adjust my expectations. This may deviate from my lesson plan, for this particular student.