

16: 7th Social Studies Newspapers PreInt

Speaker 1: The content is Specific Island Nations and the History of Hawaiian Kingdom. At this school they tend to blend the two subjects. There is a newspaper project that I've done in the past where there is 8 groups for the 8 Island Nations and they look at creating a newspaper based on pre-Western influence. After research the Island Nation prior to Western explorers coming in and then we also based it off of something called FREPA, which is Family, Religion, Education, Economics, Politics, and Arts. They're researching the FREPA topics and they're coming up with articles and the end project is to create this newspaper they each have to write 2 articles, they have to submit creative pieces like crossword or [inaudible 00:01:03] ad. That's the end summative big project for the quarter.

Now, I think most of my students, especially with technology being such a huge thing for them, they haven't actually physically touched a newspaper. I had to build some background knowledge for them before I give them the assignment. This particular assignment that we're doing today is simply playing with the newspaper, like literally touching it. I bet for some of them this is the first time they have ever literally touched a newspaper. They're going to go through the newspaper, check it out, see what's there, see the format, see the layout, see the headlines, just so they can start building some background knowledge so that they'll know how to build their own newspaper in the very end.

The student learning outcomes for this particular one is to analyze the various parts of the newspaper to categorize what they're seeing by FREPA so I'm going to start [00:02:00] to introduce FREPA not today but in this week, giving them more of that. I just want them to recognize what the articles are about and then also to identify what's in the newspaper itself. Today, they're going to do a scavenger hunt first just to break the ice and have fun so they can go through it and look at it. Then they're going to have extension activity where they're going to read an article and then break it down, who, what, when, why or how, imparting quotes that people are using so they can start to see the elements that they will need for their own article. Then after that over the weekends their next follow-up activity is to start looking for articles in the newspaper directly related to FREPA.

For today because it's just an introductory thing it's going to be very formative. They have a half sheet for the scavenger hunt. If they find all the things, check. I know that they've got this. I'll be listening to their conversations, their discussions, see what they're finding. In the beginning we're also going to have a quick like just background information on newspapers, some vocabs, so they'll be taking notes on that. I'm going to be engaging the class with questions, simple questions, so it's relevant to their lives such as, how many of you have read a newspaper before? Do you read a real version, an online version? This blends itself to the article they're going to read. Do they get their news from another source?

Then the article they're going to read is talking about how a lot of people today are getting their news through Facebook. They're not getting it from the newspaper and

they're not getting it from an online newspaper site. In Facebook they're popping up in their newsfeed different articles. As people click on those articles Facebook is creating algorithms to put more of those types of articles. Then it talks about how like the New York Times is working with Facebook to figure out how they can sell [00:04:00] their newspaper more and get it into people's feed so they can direct the Facebook users over to New York Times. Trying to show the kids how the newspaper is relevant, how it's connected to them, and then trying to see how they're interacting with the newspaper.

I'm thinking that I might find students will say, "Oh, no. I don't ever," but then they're going to start to see, "Oh, I do see it in Facebook," or some other social media. Another thing that I was thinking about is when you open up your web browser, if you have it set to MSN or something, then they'll pop up with little news events. Just trying to see if-, how connected they are to the receipt of news in their daily lives. Then I'm also going to look at their families. How does your family interact with the newspaper? Because we might find that zero interaction at all. Then it'll start leading itself to the question, how are you getting your information?

My overarching essential question for the newspaper is how does a newspaper influence the community? As a goal I'm hoping that they'll start to see the importance of being connected to the news, what kind of articles are being presented in the newspaper, how those articles portray a culture, because in the very end for their summative they're basically going to be portraying a culture. What elements do you need to have in the news articles or in the ads or in the little extras that is a window to the culture or that society? Lots of different elements. Again, it's a huge project that we're working on, step by step, and this is a very, very first introduction to the whole thing.

The students have already known the expectations of the class in general. We have tribes agreements, respect is very important, they're [00:06:00] set up in pods, they're used to that. We vary the structure, the classroom, already. Basic behaviors they should know. Now, with that said, they're 7th grade so of course pockets of interruptions occur. I think in the beginning the way we structure it is to get them engaged, they'll play with the newspaper. Definitely as I go I give them the behaviors that I want to see. I think it's really important you don't tell them what not to do, you tell them what to do. Otherwise, there's a million things that they're going to end up doing. You're going to keep saying, "Don't do that, don't do that, don't do that." I think in the beginning just setting up ...

It should be a novelty to see the newspaper so when they walk in the door I'll have to tell them, "Okay, there's newspapers at the table. If you could leave them in the center until I'm ready that will be great." Those kinds of things. Just giving them specific task and direction so they know how to handle it. I usually, of course I should knock on wood, I don't have huge disruptions. It will be like the off task behavior. The way I deal with that usually is if I can put myself in their proximity just go and check on them, see what their conversation is. If that's not an available procedure for me, like if I'm the middle, conducting, then simply calling on their name or just saying, "You know, there's some students in the class. You're being disrespectful. I'd like to continue. I'd appreciate

it if you make a better choice." They're used to me saying those kinds of things. They're usually very ... They respond very well to that.

For today they're going to do the beginning part, the newspaper lesson, just to enter to the newspaper. My essential question for them is how does the newspaper influence a community? I'm hoping that they start to look at the articles and they start to see what types of things are included, what types of things are not included, who's featured, who's not. Then eventually I'm not going to tell them yet but eventually we're going to take more of a [00:08:00] anthropological look at it and see how does the pieces, and the way it's set up, and the types of stories, and even the voice, how does that show a window into a person's culture and society. Then for the next one, then the grand for that guy is how does FREPA shape a culture. To scaffold into that we're going to do FREPA coming up with the newspaper that they're working on right now.

I hope that by giving them the newspaper and not letting them touch it in the beginning is like the, "Oh, what is this? Oh, what is this," and so they're automatically engaged. The beginning questions that I have for them set up it's to try and check to see what's their interaction with the newspaper, with their families interaction with the newspaper just so that they can start building that up. Then, excuse me. Then we have the actual scavenger hunt activity where they actually get to tear it apart and look through it and see what they can find. I'm hoping just that carrot sitting in front of them by the time they actually get to touch it they'll be super excited about it. That's my hope.

My end goal is for the kids to create a newspaper based on a Polynesian Island Nation pre-Western influence, so we're talking like 1600, 1700's. If I gave them that project there's no connection to their life. The only connection is it's the content that they're studying in the class. It's super dry and super boring. I also, if I want them to create a newspaper I need to make sure that they know what a newspaper is, what it looks like, what it feels like. Instead of assuming that they know all those things I want to go all the way back and I want to build first with just a current newspaper. I hope that by using the current newspaper, local newspaper, it's relevant and meaningful [00:10:00] and useful to them because they'll see stories that are currently happening in their lives hopefully we will see people that they know. They'll see the sports teams that they like.

Whatever their interaction with the stories, whether it'd be fun piece stories or the editorial or the cartoons or the sports, they somehow can start forming this connection with the newspaper. Then they'll transfer whatever pique their interest to their personal newspaper because they'll do it as a group, they're going to choose what kind of article are you going to write, what kind of extra are you going to do. Are you going to do a cartoon? Are you going to do a sporting event? Are you going to do an editorial? Whatever they see and they like now then they'll transfer that to their newspaper. Hopefully if we get them hooked on a newspaper now, make it relevant they can see how it's showcasing stories that are happening in their personal lives. Then they'll be able to keep that going for that. End project.