

25: 8th Science Tides PostInterview

Speaker 1: I had three intended learning targets. I didn't quite get through all of them, but I did at least compare and contrast, the spring and neap tides. Which was one of the main things I wanted to do. I did have to make a little changes throughout the lesson. I had to adjust based on how long they took. How long it was taking them. There were some areas of confusion, or didn't really understand. I had to back up a little bit, but I think overall I covered at least two of the learning targets that I originally had wanted to cover. I also, referred back to some of the older things that we've been going over. The older concepts, because that was one of the main objectives, was to wrap up this unit. I did prompt a lot of questions to spark that interest, and get their brains going again on that concept. I feel like we had a lot of good class discussions. It took a while in the beginning for them to start opening up. But I think I had t fin the right words, the right questions to pull the information out of them. Because it sort of appeared to me that they were a little bit confused at times, maybe not quite sure. Quickly in my head, I had to think of ways to go a little bit more basic, step back to help them to understand so we can end up moving forward.

The tide charts were pretty effective for the students. I think it's very unfamiliar to them. I think number one, it's hard for them to learn something new, and that small. We had a couple comments where the students were saying that it's hard to learn or see a pattern because the boxes, or the words, numbers. [00:02:00] They're so tiny. They're under two inch blocks. It's hard for a middle school student to really look closely at bunch of numbers, and see a pattern. While that was my intention, I think I may have to back up a little bit, maybe go over more about the numbers. Really get them to see more specifically what kind of patterns are they looking for. Not just look at the whole sheet. But I might have to narrow it more down to certain topics at a time, and see if they can find that pattern with that topic.

I did plan for three objectives. It was pretty ambitious to go with three, but I was able to at least do a few of them. Have the students accomplish a few of the targets. It's always better for me to have more a plan, than less of a plan. Because I notice that if I run out of time, or if the students finish early they get restless. Then I get my behavior problems. At least if I plan more than what I would anticipate, it' better off for me. I can keep the kids always busy, engaged, and they always have something to do. It's related to the topic.

The way that my classroom is set up, I have groups of threes and tables. I space them out with the seats, as well as the tables, so that I have enough room to see what's going on from pretty much any point in my classroom. I can also walk 360 degrees around any table. That will help me. If I got to talk quietly to a student to help them out, or if I have address the class at one time I have access to everywhere. I'm able to view almost everything that's going on.

From the time that the bell rings, before class, the students have already been trained to come in. [00:04:00] They read the board. I have their work up on the board, homework, the planned classwork for the day. They're already very used to the routine.

I can pretty much, be somewhere else, for the first few minutes of class. I should be able to come back in there, and they're good to go. They started reading, they started their note taking. They started reviewing. Whatever it is that I put up on the board, they should already know what to do.

A lot of preparation. A lot of that was practice. It doesn't come over a couple days. It took a few weeks to get that down, but that really helps. When I am trying to set up the lesson, I want them to do some pre-reading. We want to maybe, reflect a little bit on yesterday, so we can catch, and refresh for what's going on today in class.

I think the students were fully engaged when it was time to take notes. They were doing their research. They had a little trouble, when I wanted them to be discussing in small groups. Ironically, that's the time when they're quiet. But I do try and push a lot of collaboration. Especially, if it's just simple note taking. A lot of them need support. They all read at different levels. The way that they're paired in their groups is also strategically placed. Like I mentioned earlier. They're all meant for a purpose. I like when they work together for things like that, because you're pulling together ideas. Somebody might catch an idea, that the other person might not have. That kind of tandem or group reading helps to bring out the most. It brings out a lot of different perspectives on the topic.

I think partially, although the film didn't cover the entire lesson that I would've wanted it to. [00:06:00] The intent was they can actually analyze the title, and their birthday for the tide calendar. That's coming up real soon, but I felt that that was the one key personalization to this lesson. Where they can actually relate to it, because I've seen it in the past where it's personal for them. They're grouped with people in their month, and their asking each other, 'Oh when's your birthday? Mine's on that day.' It just brings in that engagement, and with that interest they're actually more inclined to talk about it. To think about it, and actually pay more attention. They all essentially learn it better.

I have the students do a lot of writing. A lot of it is not taking straight from the book. But after that they will have to paraphrase. I want them to do that together as a group, because they share ideas, they talk it out. It also practices writing. A lot of students, even in eighth grade, have trouble expressing what they mean. Especially, they're given a definition, but they don't know how to put into their own words. They can't spit I back out, a different way. They have to read it. We also noticed that a lot of students have trouble even finding the definition. They find the bold word in a textbook, and they still can't pull out the definition. It's sitting right there in their face in the sentence. They're reading the sentence, but it doesn't say, 'The definition is.' These kinds of activities helps them to, not only learn the science concepts, but it's helping out with their English concepts as well. Learning how to find a definition. How to read between the lines. How to paraphrase things. How to summarize.

Although I didn't get to it on film, one of the end goals on this assignment is two fold, was to graph in the middle. There was a box where they were going to graph the tide on their birthday. They would set up the date of points, the two axis, and they would have to figure out where those dots go. Look at the trend line, and a lot of students have a

hard time with that. I know that. It's one of the things for our department was to focus on graphing. [00:08:00] It's just one extra way that I can help support that goal, and also for math.

We did have a few comments on the tide calendar being too small. I would totally agree. It's really, really tiny. I mean it's almost too small for college level students to look at it and try and analyze a pattern on there. But I think, if I had more time, the students needed to be a little bit more prepared. A little bit more background information with the content, before they could really use the application part of this. I think the next time I see the students, I'm going to go back a little bit. Maybe take a step back, and review the basics on what a tide is. Make sure they're real concrete between contrasting the two different spring tide, neap tides. Then, we can jump into the, 'Okay what does this mean. I'm looking at this foreign tide calendar. What does it mean?' I think, I went maybe a little too soon on the final application which is why, I didn't have that rich discussion that I was looking for.