

5: 3rd ELA ReadingInferences PostInt

Speaker 1: I think you can always make it more clear for students. I think making inferences is hard to communicate the purpose because it's a hard thing to grasp but that's why I chose to use the vocabulary thick and thin. It's something students can understand. Something thin is very surface deep. Something thick, there's more to it. They can associate ... Okay, when I'm asking you to read I need you to go beyond the thin. I know you see a girl. I know you see a hill and I know you see a sun. I need you to go deeper and go into thick reading and tell me what do you know about the girl. What do you know about hills and put it all together. I think I made it relevant for the students because they understood you need to go deeper, make thicker ... Make better, use the clues to go deeper into the text.

I think it's a very important thing. In reading specifically, over the years that I've been teaching, is that you need to do small group instruction, especially with reading. I got a good 30, 40 minutes with those students and if you noticed, there wasn't much reader action in the rest of the class. That time with those students was very good quality time. The small group, I think, is very important. I think also the anchor charts are very important. I think using regular, everyday language like thick and thin, but also incorporating academic language like schema and [meco 00:01:49] knowledge and inference is really important too because it's not about the common core, but the common core does use academic language. The kids need to be able to relate it back and forth so they're just not sitting there like [00:02:00] I've never learned this. No, you've learned it, it's just a different way of saying it.

I think organization is very key in a successful lesson. I think even the just the way that I do my centers is very ... There's a strategy to it. For example, this was the first time that I ... Not the first time but we had a fun art center but that can also get very energetic or it's very unstructured or unretained compared to the other centers, so I specifically place them near me so I can do a quick check. Also, as you can see, this was space that I did not use in my room because it's not immediate to me. My other kids were sitting right there and there so I could visually check that everyone was on task when they needed to.

I think centers, from the start, you just need clear expectations. Students need to know what they're doing. They need to know what will happen if they're not doing it. I think this lesson could have gone a different way if I was reader acting most of the time. Clear expectations and just student accountability was the biggest thing. At centers, 75% of the class is independent, 25% is just with me and we're doing the meat of the lesson. You really need to be able to rely on your students to guide their own learning after you have taught them how to do that.

[inaudible 00:03:35] centers, if you are discussing something, it needs to be on the topic you're discussing. If I hear a language that's not associated with what we're talking about, then I'll redirect you. Second, you need to be in your clear area defined spot. They have different tiers they go to. The first tier is if you don't know what you're supposed to do, ask somebody in your group. If [00:04:00] someone in your group doesn't know, then ask somebody else in a different group. Try to look at the center's

board and see who was there yesterday because they'll probably be able to guide you. Then after you've asked three people, that's when you can ask me. That why, if you notice, there wasn't a lot of teacher disruption.

I thought it was pretty engaged since we're pretty engaged. If I could think about it again, I think it would have been more successful if I had the scaffolded cards because there was some lull time as the students were making their inferences but I was able to redirect one by giving her two because she finished quick. I was able to give her another one and then as one student, Philip, was struggling a little bit more, the other students were kind of waiting around. As a teacher reflection, maybe giving them each one to work on after or I should have instructed them as do this one independently, do your next one and then try and turn to talk to your partner if you notice your partner is done. Just something to give them a task after the task so they know exactly what they're doing. I noticed that they didn't know what to do after they were done because I didn't tell them.

I know they really like arts and it's hard to infuse arts a lot but our last story last week was creating murals that mean something. They created this mural. The vocabulary one, there are three activities for a vocabulary, so if they finish that, then it's student choice of what they want to do. They have literature circle books that they are able to read. They have an online library they're able to read, but you still have to finish three tasks before you can do the free choice. Then the [lexia 00:05:48] center ... I can understand that it's hard to sit there for 35 minutes to do an online program, but it is a directive from our school that they [00:06:00] need to get 60 minutes a week. What I do is, I monitor their time and after 60 minutes, that's when they do their free time or free choice. They just know it's a task that they have to complete.

I think the students enjoyed it. Like I tell them, I don't know if you caught it but they said "this is hard." I said, "we don't say that it's hard in our classroom. We just say we have to work harder." I tell them the beauty in learning is the struggle. If you are struggling, that means you are learning. Embrace it and let's see what we can do to fix it. If you notice, there wasn't any embarrassment or shame that they didn't get it. They quickly say I don't get it. Then I was able to walk through, especially Philip, as soon as he got his card he was like "I don't know, Miss Cruz." So then I was able to walk him, well are they inside or outside? Let's first look at the setting. Then he still wasn't getting they were outside. He was like, "well, they were inside first and then outside." I was like, "well look at your evidence." Just kind of building that classroom culture of there is no shame in not understanding or we make mistakes and that just means that we're doing what we're supposed to be doing.

One, I would create cards that are beginning, intermediate and advanced cards. That way I can gauge it because I know where my students are at. Two, I would want to bring it back to the literature circle so they can see how this skill transfers from an independent card and how you can actually transfer this skill into a chapter book that you are reading. I guess when I meet with my literature circles, I'm going to ask them to read the next chapter and create an inference to use that skill and translate it into actual independent reading,