

3rd ELA Reading Post Interview

Interviewer: You effective in communicating the purpose of the lesson?

Teacher: We set the guidelines in the beginning as a group and what we want to get out of the story and why it's important to be reading the story and understanding, so they have that set already. I think having my expectations in place helps them know as far as their group what's expected, but then when they're summarizing thinking about the story, thinking about the folktales, we have the focus of folktales, and then also their character traits. They know that these are ... Kind of giving them that, like they have that one person they follow through the whole story so it's like their personal little connection, but it's also meeting that outcome that we're focusing on how the character can change throughout a story.

Being able to summarize the text and discuss with your peers what you're reading. They know that those are the outcomes that we're wanting to understand what we're reading, we're wanting to talk with our friends about what we're reading. I make a relation, the teacher who's in here we're friends, they know we're friends outside of school and I tell them how we'll both read the same book at the same time and we'll call each other or text each other like, "Did you get to this part of the story," or we'll get to work and, "Oh my gosh can you believe that happened yesterday?" I talk about how talking with another person about a book you're reading not only helps you understand the book, but it makes it more exciting because you can't wait to talk about whatever just happened that day.

Especially if it's adventure or mystery or something. Trying to give them those connections of how talking about a book with somebody can make a book more exciting and make you want to read farther into the story and get to talk with your friend again about the book. Just creating that expectation of that you're thinking about what you read and valuing what you read and making the connections with what you read.

Interviewer: What parts of your instructional practice do you think were most effective in supporting students to meet the objectives?

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Teacher: Definitely expectations and structure, that the kids understand exactly how the reading group should go and what's expected. We've had days that the group was off task and they had to move their clip down and go read by themselves and they didn't get to have that time to read with their peers and they had to read alone. They know right away that if you're not following the expectations you're not going to get to be a part of what we get to do. It's look at as, "Oh we get to read in groups today." We also will have if everybody reads really good the next day we'll go read outside and we'll spread out around the grass.

I change it up into partners. Trying to find ways that changes it and that are kind of privileges for them makes them understand this is what you're earning to do, we could

just be reading a boring book by ourselves at our desk and instead we're getting to be together in a group. I think as a teacher you can kind of make them think that that's a privilege, even though for me is that they're reading. If you make as like, "You have to earn to get to read with your friends and read with your peers," that helps them know that this is a privilege that we get to read like this and just setting the expectations so they know exactly what's okay and what's not okay.

With that paper in front of them they have the guidelines, but they also have the question prompts. Those guidelines on there usually they'll review them with their groups if need be or I'll review them with the whole class if need be, but just setting that structure in the class that they know what's expected helps make the groups run so smoothly that it's seamless in here. That's probably the biggest tool is having that structure.

Interviewer: Do you think the small group instruction as well supports?

Teacher: Definitely. Being able to work small group, the lower kids need it to understand, there's a lot of vocabulary in the story that's over 3rd grade level, that helps them with understanding, but even reading with my higher kids and checking their comprehension and their understanding and relating back to the story, that small group time is priceless getting to work with the kids like that and checking for understanding and just seeing where they're at with their reading. It's quick formative checks. It's just valuable, which makes me appreciate having that other teacher in the room for 45 minutes because that makes it even more valuable because I can meet with more kids.

Interviewer: What role did organization and planning play in the lesson?

Teacher: Planning was kind of minimal because I have everything ready, but just kind of seeing, I try to look through the chapters. I know the book, so I don't want to end them in a part, I like to end them in a part with a little tiny sense of closure for that day. Looking through the chapters, I have to plan that out. Otherwise, because everything's already kind of in place there's not too much planning. As far as organization though, I think being organized and the kids seeing that this is what we're doing and this is what we have planned out and this is the schedule, that helps it run smoothly everyday. It's kind of built into the structure of it.

Interviewer: What role did behavior management play in the lesson as far as expectations, procedures, routines?

Teacher: I think behavior management is the number one thing I had to have for this whole lesson to work, which kind of seems silly because it's a reading lesson but I wouldn't be able to do the small groups if there wasn't behavior management already in place. It's the only way these groups work. It wouldn't work first quarter because it's something that I had to build into the classroom, into the expectations, but I think if you didn't have it that these groups wouldn't work. This wouldn't be possible. We'd have to do whole group reading or by themselves reading which just wouldn't work because of the

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level of books.

It is the number one thing that makes literature circles work because it lets the kids know the expectations, it lets them know that they need to be self-directed because the teacher is working with a group. Even the understanding that they shouldn't be coming up and interrupting our group because it's our group's time, so if they have questions they need to ask peers, try and figure it out. 100% behavior management is what drove the whole possibility of literature circles. They wouldn't be able to work otherwise.

Interviewer: How do you think the lesson went with regards to student engagement?

Teacher: I think the students are engaged. Definitely my group was engaged. I think with my group, sometimes they're not looking in the book but they're definitely listening. I think it's almost harder for them to follow along in the books, so I'll see the kids either staring at me while I read or maybe zoning out. I know they're listening because they're able to answer my questions and give feedback with what just happened in the story. With the other groups, you can tell they're engaged because they're on task. I know that they're engaged because they're not playing and they're reading and they're having their discussions with each other.

There's days that there's a group that gets off task and it may just be kind of one student getting the group off task. I think that getting on that right away and letting them resetting the expectations or maybe taking away the group time for that day gets them back to where they're focused. You can see the engagement just in the fact that they're on task.

Interviewer: How do you think the students found the lesson meaningful or relevant?

Teacher: They find it relevant because it's a unit and it's tying into everything that we're working on. We have that ongoing map, we have Chinese culture, we have the lanterns around the room, the dragons around the room, we just did a field trip to Chinatown. You can hear the entire field trip was, "Look, those lion statues are like from the book."

[00:08:00] Everything was connected to this book, even though I didn't say necessarily like, "You need to connect this to what we're reading." It was that natural connection of, "Look at that. That goes exactly with what we read in the story," or, "That looks like what the emperor was wearing."

They made those connections naturally because it's part of what we're doing. I think that's what's great about having a unit is it makes everything more valuable because there's just connections. Every time you're doing something there's a connection to it, and it gets the kids invested in what they're learning about because they see that it's not, "Okay it's social studies time. Okay it's science time. Okay it's math time." It's just whoa we have dived into this and we are 100% into it all day. It's meaningful and they're invested completely because it's exciting and they want to make it all connected.

We're doing mini research projects and they had to pick something from the story and create a cultural project about it. I have kids that are writing about how dragons are in Chinese culture and how emperors in Chinese, and Chinese New Year, and the Lantern Festival. They've kind of taken one little thing from the story and turned it into a cultural project. It gets them excited. It's definitely meaningful for them because we're doing it throughout all the curriculum.

Interviewer: How would you like to develop this lesson in the future?

Teacher: I'm constantly developing it because I'm doing it every year and I don't want to get bored with it. I think just finding new ways to tie it in and make the unit even more complete. I am continually trying to find more things for math and science because that's sometimes a little harder to tie in, but any way that I can find it. This was our first year taking a field trip that tied into it. I'm constantly trying to find any new way to bring more into the unit because I think the more that you have, the more excited and invested they are. Anything I can find. Something as simple as I was at Costco and saw a cool Chinese book, I bought the book for them to bring into class.

[00:10:00] They think it's great because you're bringing it in, and we have books that we line up up front that tie into it. The first year I didn't have the author study books that went along with it, so I did a donors choose and got those books. The next quarter they go into similar stories with Chinese culture, but they're more ... It's the same author but it's not like the adventure story. One of them is, one of them is the prequel to this, but some are just about a little girl who's new to America and her family's Chinese. They're making that connection, but finding those other ways to bring in the culture or something from the book into the unit makes it one big whole piece and helps me find even more things to tie in which makes the kids excited.

yeah. Hopefully I'm not rambling. I feel like I'm rambling.

Interviewer: No, no. You're-