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Education 418

Differentiated Lesson Plan: Text-to-Self Connections

I. Introduction:

Grade: 7th

Subject: English

Context: This lesson would be a 75 minute period during our Identity Unit in which we are reading a novel. Text-to-self connections are vital in understanding and relating to fiction writing, so I would make this come early so my students are are well scaffolded to make connections throughout our reading.

Common Core Standards:

SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.7.5. Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

RL.7.10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Lesson Objectives:

Content: Students will learn to make connections from their personal lives to the reading through text-to-self connections to give them the tools to relate to a text. Students will learn to use classifying language using evidence, such as "_____ reminds me of _____." or "_____ made me think of _____."

II. Special Factors and Considerations

Modifications/Accommodations:

1. Accommodation: Material will be presented in small chunks at a time so that the teacher has time to continually check for understanding and so the students are not overwhelmed by a

large amount of content at once. Having things explained systematically is helpful for any learner, but it especially aids students who have ADHD or are Emerging Bilinguals.

2. Accommodation: The lesson rotates between silent writing, partner sharing, and big group discussion. By having the period be ever changing the students will be more focused and less bored. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening each relate to different types of learners (visual vs. auditory) as well as different personality types (introverts vs. extraverts). I wanted to include several ways of expressing oneself so that students of all types will feel welcome and have the opportunity to communicate in a way that is most comfortable for them. Whether a student is an introvert in personality or because they are a high-functioning child with Autism, having different modes of expression can support a variety of students.

3. Accommodation: This lesson has a large technology portion as students use the internet to blog and collaborate with each other. Because all students will be using computers, the whole class is encouraged to use Merriam-Webster online to look up words that they don't know. They are also encouraged to use headphones in the classroom so that they can listen to the words if hearing the word helps them learn. Having this freedom gives students a chance to learn vocabulary at their own pace, because students often don't feel comfortable standing up to grab a dictionary in front of the class.

4. Accommodation: The use of sentence stems is a great support for Emerging Bilinguals as well as students with learning disabilities. It's important to remember that students don't have the same experience in expressing their thoughts that we do, and any student would benefit a structured sentence map. By enforcing sentence structures, it also makes the classroom discussion more equitable and respectful as all students are sharing their thoughts in the same way. Even though this may feel formulaic, for young students in the 7th grade nobody wants to stand out. This means Emerging Bilinguals, students with learning disabilities, and students of every level have a way of expressing themselves that is equitable, which gives the focus to the actual content. Students don't have to figure out *how* to say what they want so they are not embarrassed if maybe English isn't their first language or if they have speech impediments or disabilities.

5. Modification: Students with reading disabilities such as dyslexia, etc. will not be required to read the whole story during class time. I will meet with those students with IEPs and make a plan with them as to how they want to handle reading in the classroom. I can provide the

story for them early so they have a chance to familiarize themselves earlier or I will also allow them extra time afterwards to turn in their connections. These would be private agreements between me and the student, the rest of the class would not be privy to this information.

IEP Objectives

1. When given a set of 10 analogies (e.g.; apple is to red as elephant is to _____.) orally or in writing, Angelina* will correctly identify/state the logical relationship with 80% accuracy in 4 out of 5 opportunities as measured by data collection and student work samples.
2. When an academic or social activity requires social interaction, Eduardo* will use appropriate language to interact and engage with other students of the group in 80% of opportunities as measured by specific data collection.

Classroom Arrangements:

My classroom will be arranged to allow students the most movement and freedom possible. Even though this lesson does not include elements of movement, it is one of my overall goals for my other lessons. I want students to feel like the classroom is their own, I will have materials available at anytime during the class time to be equitable in terms of resources, but also for students to feel ownership of the space. Students will be arranged in groups. I will most frequently be seen wandering around to the different groups monitoring and checking for understanding. Students will be arranged by learning styles, personality types, while also considering behavior needs and physical needs (i.e. glasses, hearing aids, etc.). For example, group number one consists of Eduardo*, Veronica*, Jessica*, and Rachel*. Eduardo is in the process of receiving an IEP, he has trouble reading and is often lost in class. Sitting in the front helps him understand the directions. Jessica needs glasses but her parents have not taken her to get them yet, so she sits in the front so that she can see the board. Veronica is good at following directions but can be easily distracted by her peers so she is also well placed at the front. Lastly, Rachel is a GATE student and is very patient with Eduardo, so she is able to answer his questions while the teacher is making other rounds. Rachel is also easily distracted because she often finishes her work early, sitting next to Eduardo gives her a leadership position that

supports both of their needs. All of these students need to sit in the front for different reasons, which I took into consideration when making the seating chart.

< View from the front door of the classroom.

< View from the back of the classroom.

III. Instruction/Lesson Plan

Connection to Students:

This short story, *Names/Nombres* by Julia Alvarez, would connect to all students because during adolescence, students have a special connection to their names. Many students change their names while they're in school, this is because they identify strongly with their name and what they are called. In this way, this story relates to any adolescents, but the cultural side also makes it especially relatable for ELs or anyone with a different background. By having them make Text-to-Self connections, it allows every student to learn how to be aware of the connections they're making while they read!

Vocabulary and Language:

- Tier 1: Computer, Dictionary, Nickname

- Tier 2: Remind, Connection

- Tier 3: Text-to-Self Connections

Scaffolding Techniques/ELD Strategies:

- Word Brainstorm on board to break down the words "text" and "self"

- Think-Pair-Share

- Writing everything on the board, and pointing to it while I speak

- Sentence stems for every portion

Higher-Order Questions:

Remembering/Understanding

- What are text-to-self connections?

Applying/Analyzing

- Why is making connections to the text important?

Evaluating/Creating

- What does my name mean to me?

Interaction and Discussion:

- Think-Pair-Share

- Online group discussion on Kidblog.org

Assessments:

Formal

- Students will highlight and write down their three text-to-self connections within the text.

- Students will submit their Kidblogs and are required to respond to one of their peers.

Informal

- Students will share their connection to their group.

- Students will have the option to share their connections to the class.

Technology:

- Kidblog

- Notable PDF for annotation

- Merriam-Webster.com

Resources/Materials Needed:

- Computers

Learning Instruction:

(2 minutes)- Welcome students as they walk in. Have computer monitors get computers for their group.

(15 minutes)- Kidblog Collaboration

      Quick-Write on Kidblog:

      Hello class! Today we will start with a quick write on Names. Names are important to us and are one of the ways we identify ourselves. Do you have a different name at home? Do you have a different name with your friends? What does your name mean to you?

      Read your peers' responses and respond respectively. Start your responses like this:

      Hi _(Name)_,

      I like your post because _____.

      I agree with you because _____.

      Our nicknames our similar because _____.

      Our nicknames are different because _____.

      Best,

      Ms. Weber

Now let's share. What did you learn about your classmates' nicknames?

(7 minutes)- Teach Text-to-Self Connections

- Why do good readers make connections? Connections help us read because they allow us to make visual pictures in our head, interact with the words instead of just reading them, and to make the reading more interesting and personal to us.

    - Do brainstorm clouds for Text and Self.

        - A text can be anything from a story (like the one we'll be reading), a song, a picture, a TV show, etc.

        - Self means yourself, your life, your personal experiences.

    - So what do you think "Text-to-Self" connections mean? Draw arrow connecting the two clouds. Write definition.

- My favorite type of connections are called "Text-to-Self Connections." These are connections that we make to our own lives as we are reading. If I read something, and it reminds me of something that has happened to me, then I have made a text-to-self connection.

- (7 minutes) Check for understanding- What are text to self connections? Point to the board to help students see where it is. So now we are going to read the story *Names/Nombre* by Julia Alvarez.

    - Put story on projector.

    - Model with first page. Read the first page out loud thinking at the same time. As I read "_____" it makes me think of my family at home. Instead of the English "Car-la," they same my name in German, which kind of drops the "r" sound: "Cah-la."

        - Who can tell me what my text-to-self connection was?

        - Why is making connections to the text important?

- Now we will do the Think-Pair-Share

    - Everyone open the article using Notable PDF (My class will have learned this in the first two weeks of class.)

    - (15 minutes) I want you to read the story silently to yourself. You may use Merriam-Webster online to look up any words you don't know. Hold up two fingers if you would like head phones to listen to the word.

    - As you are reading, use the comment feature to write down your three text-to-self connections.

- (8 minutes) Now that you have all made your three connections, go ahead and share with your groups what connections you have made. Use these sentence stems: On page…"_____ reminds me of _____." or "_____ made me think of _____." Be prepared to share with the larger group!

- (5 minutes) Big Group Discussion: What connections did you make? Where in the text did you make this connection? Have all students answer in the model format.

- (2-3 minutes) Recap: What are text-to-self connections? Why do you think they are helpful? What similarities did you have with your group? What does my name mean to me? Thank everyone for participating and doing a good job!

Assessment:

Informal: The connections that students make would be monitored mostly for completion. I believe there is no way to sufficiently or equitably grade a student's personal connections to a text. By reading through them at home, I will be able to see if students were able to make connections based on the thoughtfulness of their responses as well as their discussions throughout the class period. This is also the first time students will have done something like this, and I don't want to discourage them from making connections and marking the text by giving them grades.

Formal: The Kidblogs will be given a grade, because this is an expectation given in my classroom. They are graded based on the rubric (below). By giving these posts a grade it reinforces the idea of professional writing in an online setting, which I think is really important for this generation to see modeled. Students who need more time to complete them will be accommodated. Furthermore, if students receive lower than a 2 on their posts they have the opportunity to revise for a higher score to encourage a growth mindset.

Grading Criteria:

4 *Exceptional.* The blog post is focused and coherently integrates examples with explanations or analysis. The post demonstrates awareness of its own limitations or implications, and it considers multiple perspectives when appropriate. The entry reflects in-depth engagement with the topic.

3 *Satisfactory.* The blog post is reasonably focused, and explanations or analysis are mostly based on examples or other evidence. Fewer connections are made between ideas, and though new insights are offered, they are not fully developed. The post reflects moderate engagement with the topic.

2 *Underdeveloped.* The blog post is mostly description or summary, without consideration of alternative perspectives, and few connections are made between ideas. The post reflects passing engagement with the topic.

1 *Limited.* The blog post is unfocused, or simply rehashes previous comments, and displays no evidence of student engagement with the topic.

0 *No Credit.* The blog post is missing or consists of one or two disconnected sentences.

IV. Rationale

I love English. I am obsessed with books and literature and stories. This is one of the main reasons that I decided to become a teacher. And even though it is one of my goals to instill a love and respect for English within all of my students, it is still not my main priority. Instead, it is most important to me that students always feel welcome and comfortable in my classroom. Students come from all types of households, they all have different amounts of knowledge and experience, and different needs for their learning. The first step in helping anyone learn anything is developing a welcoming classroom. This is created through the art of the seating chart. Research states that "desks and other work stations should be arranged to support the type of instructional activities that are planned for the class, such as lecture, cooperative learning groups, independent work seating, or center seating" (Smith, Gartin, & Murdick, 2012, p. 119). My classroom is arranged in groups of four because my students will always be involved in group activities and discussion. I encourage students to ask each other for help before asking me to facilitate a collaborative environment.

By using technology in the classroom gives a resource to students that creates a more equitable environment. I allow all of my students to always use Merriam-Webster online and other resources online to help them. This works really well for all students, including students with learning disabilities because students often feel embarrassed to stand up and look up a word in the old school dictionary. By having it on the computer, students can easily access any word without their classmates' attention. Merriam-Webster also allows them to listen to the

word to help them with pronunciation and memorization. Of course, the Internet provides much more than just electronic vocabulary support. According to the National Center for Disabilities, "assistive technology can help children with learning disabilities leverage their strengths and work around or compensate for specific learning problems" (NCLD.org, 2014). By allowing my students to use whatever technological resources they need to support their learning, I create an educational environment that provides understanding, comfort, and success!

To keep teaching purposeful and relevant, it is important to plan according to the backwards design model. For differentiated instruction this is especially important, because by remembering what exactly you want students to get out of a lesson, I can identity what types of accommodations and adaptations are appropriate for my students with different types of learning disabilities or emotional disturbances (Smith, Gartin, & Murdick, 2012, p. 169). For example, my lesson here is for students to make text-to-self connections, which is one of the most important reading strategies to make reading interesting. Knowing that my priority is for students to start practicing making connections, everything else becomes superfluous. This means that if I have a student who has trouble reading silently, I can arrange a way for that student to listen to the short story rather than read it silently. If a student is struggling with the story that we are reading I can find another short story at a more appropriate reading level or even content level for that student, because it doesn't matter what the student is connecting to as long as he or she is practicing the idea of hearing something and relating their own experiences to the text. Keeping the purpose or objective in mind makes differentiated lessons very clear.

References

Gartin B., Murdick N., Smith T. E. C. (2012). *Including Adolescents with Disabilities in General Education Classrooms*. Pearson.

National Center for Learning Disabilities. (2014). *Assistive Technology: At School.*
http://www.ncld.org/students-disabilities/assistive-technology-education