

Rush Henrietta APPR Post-Observation Form

1. As you reflect on the lesson, were students cognitively engaged in the work? How do you know?

I believe my students were cognitively engaged in their work. The feedback I received from the beginning of the lesson to the end made it very clear to me that my students were engaged in the lesson, and later their biography kit. Our review of text features, reading strategies, and how they help us as readers gave me the oral feedback I needed to move onto the next lesson objective. Later, through observation and checks for understanding I was able to determine that students understood how to engage in creating their own time line using the facts from their biography that they had recorded in their books. Once students were determining the important events from their time line, my partner teacher and I had one to one conversations with each student, which also provided evidence of cognitive engagement. The final reaction and participation in the closer template of a Blackberry phone provided additional evidence that my students were cognitively engaged.

2. Did the students attain the lesson objectives? What is the evidence of their learning?

While a couple of students needed additional time to understand the process of creating the time line and later determining the most important information, eventually all of the students met the objectives of today's lessons. The evidence can be seen on the students' time-lines, bio-kit graphic organizers of important events, and the closer activity: texting a message which included an important event that had a major impact on their bio. person's life. In addition, my observations and conversations with students provided insight into who grasped the objectives completely and who will need further support determining importance from the text. I have this information recorded on my participation log.

3. How did the instructional strategies you chose support student learning? How do you know?

The instructional strategies I chose supported my student learning by following the model of gradual release. I began by activating their background knowledge, and connecting the information they had already learned with the lesson's expected objectives. Before presenting the time-line we reviewed the reading strategies I modeled and they had practiced the week prior. We also reviewed the notes from the shared reading biography. The students' reaction and participation gave me the feedback I needed to know they understood and were ready to move onto the time-line. Through modeling how to execute the time-line in sequential order students expressed their understanding through a thumbs up or thumbs down. Students were then guided through the process until they reached a level of independence to complete the task on their own. Modeling of determining important information followed the time-line using the shared reading text once again. The same process of gradual release mentioned above was put into place. After students had determined the most important events from their time-line they added each one to their Bio. Kit. I know that mastery was accomplished through the scaffolding that took place and how each student successfully completed the objectives of the lesson at different rates with varying amounts of support.

4. How have you promoted a culture for learning in your classroom?

I have promoted a culture of learning by providing opportunities for students to make choices, take responsibility, and actively engage with text and with each other on a daily basis. Students are given choice based on their interest when selecting literature for their independent reading as well as the person they selected for their biography. Students are also given a choice as to where to sit in the room during whole group time. With these choices comes responsibility. Students are expected to keep on track during their independent reading, ask questions for clarification, and remain engaged in the lesson while respecting their classmates learning. Through modeling of self-monitoring comprehension strategies, guided practice in small groups and one to one conferences students are learning how to actively engage with text. Finally, I promote a culture for learning by the way I listen and respect my students input, and how I draw on their knowledge to assist in keeping the lesson alive and the students engaged. The daily discussions we have based on text during whole group, small group, one to one or pair shares are all ways I engage students in meaningful conversations to promote a culture of learning and literacy development.

5. Did you make adjustments to your plan as you taught the lesson? What, how, and why?

The main adjustment I made to my plan was the amount of time I spent on each part of the lesson. I am attuned to my students' learning needs, and it was quite apparent additional front loading was needed to ensure they understood the importance of putting the events in sequential order, in addition to pulling the most important information for their Bio. Kits. The time it took for students to understand the objectives, and be able to implement each one extended into the original lesson plan's independent reading and conferencing time. Due to time constraints this portion of the lesson was shortened in order to meet our learning objectives and wrap up with a closing activity to reinforce students' understanding of the learning objectives.

6. If you were to teach this lesson again, what might you do (if anything) differently?

This was the first time we worked as a class on these objectives. The lesson provided an opportunity for the students that were ready to move forward with these objectives to do so, while providing time to practice and receive the necessary support for the few students at the beginning of the learning phase of determining importance.

If I were to teach this lesson again I would split the lesson into two days. Focusing on the time-line first would give my students an opportunity to digest this piece of information while providing additional time to read and conference. The second day I would use the time line to determine importance. I believe these changes would clarify any confusion a couple of my students had with the process if these two objectives were broken down into two different days. This is an ongoing unit, and we will have the opportunity to break into small groups to reinforce the learning objectives: putting events in sequential order, synthesizing the information, and determining importance. The last two objectives challenge students to think at a higher level and will require further modeling and practice for the majority of our students during future lessons.

7. Any other thoughts you would like to share about this lesson?

I am very proud of how engaged my students are in their biographies. Our unit incorporates lessons modeling self-monitoring reading comprehension strategies, and the time for students to practice these strategies during their reading. Each student is developing the reading strategies necessary to gain information across the content areas. Their enthusiasm and growing independence during this process is key to their development as active readers and writers.