

Elementary Social Studies/Writing

- Question: As you reflect on the lesson, were students cognitively engaged in the work? How do you know?

Answer: Yes, students were engaged in the lesson. On the carpet for the whole group instruction, many students showed interest in participating by raising their hands and offering answers to questions. During independent work, the students were engaged in the learning and asked questions when they needed support.

- Question: Did the students attain the lesson objectives? What is the evidence of their learning?

Answer: The students know the elements that need to be included in an expository piece of writing. They were able to use the bulleted information on the glogster and put it into their writing. Most students were able to write an expository piece on an element of Native American life independently. Some students needed support during the process. They needed prompting to add details. Some also needed their work read aloud to them so they could hear what may not have been clear. The evidence of the learning was the final copies of their writing.

- Question: How did the instructional strategies you chose support student learning? How do you know?

Answer: The instructional strategies supported student learning by modeling the beginning phases of the writing process, giving examples of details, and giving students choice in their writing topic. I also included visuals for the students to follow as we discussed the writing prompts. To keep students engaged, I purposely called on certain students and gave them "warning" that I would be needing them to participate. I tried to motivate them by posing my questions in a way that made them feel like what they knew and could share was highly important for the class to hear and for them to share.

- Question: How have you promoted a culture for learning in your classroom?

Answer: All students in this classroom know, understand and accept the expectations. They embrace the learning that occurs, despite it being difficult at times. I am conscious about making sure every student feels important and what they have to offer to this classroom is important. Even reluctant learners feel comfortable and supported in this classroom. Every student cares for on another and offers their support to their classmates. This is evidence of the respect they have toward each other and their learning.

- Question: Did you make adjustments to your plan as you taught the lesson? What, how, and why?

Answer: Yes. I made adjustments to the lesson as I taught. I wasn't sure if some students were going to need an organizer to support their writing. I decided to talk to them quietly about it, and give them choice. This was based on previous writing experiences and my thinking they may need a bit more guidance with their writing. As it turned out, it may have confused some of them because they had not been using a scaffolding approach prior to this. Had they seen and used this type of organizer before, they may have been more successful, but it was new to them and I did not anticipate it being so confusing to them. I should have taken them aside and done a more thorough explanation of it.

- Question: If you were to teach this lesson again, what might you do (if anything) differently?

Answer: When I teach this lesson in the future, I will have modeled the scaffolded outline with all students so they are familiar with it. This way any student has the ability to use it, and understand it if they were going to support a classmate using it. I may also consider working with the students who may have more difficulty prior and getting them started ahead of time. It is important to be available to all the learners and sometimes with extensive writing pieces the teacher can become consumed by the needs of a small group - not allowing you to intermix with the others. Getting them started may have helped me not feel as bad for not sitting right with the group needing support and being able to give feedback at what the others were writing.

- Question: Any other thoughts you would like to share about this lesson?

Answer: I am very proud of the effort the students put into their work. Their eagerness and desire to learn makes me feel good about our work. I love helping them love writing and learning!