Integrating Writing and Technology into the Elementary Reading Block

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Session Goals:

• Discuss the research on writing in response to literature and informational texts.

• Examine the MN English Language Arts standards related to reading, writing, and digital literacy.

• Share instructional activities designed to engage students in reading and writing print-based and digital texts.
Writing in Response to Narrative Text

College and Career Anchor Standard (Reading)

• 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
College and Career Ready Anchor Standard (Reading)

• 2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development, summarize the key ideas and supporting details.
• 3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

How Do We Accomplish This?

• Teach students to ask and answer higher level questions about print-based and digital texts through explicit teacher modeling.
• Provide opportunities for students to talk with their peers and write about text.
• Coach students to elaborate on their answers and explain their thinking.

Higher Level Talk and Writing About Text

Students show increased gains in reading when their teachers stress higher level thinking (Peterson & Taylor, 2012).

➢ Grades K-6,
➢ Students that are reading below grade level,
➢ Special Education students,
➢ Students that do not speak English as a first language.
Higher Level Thinking

DEFINITION: Higher level thinking questions engage children in interpreting text through talk or writing that relates to:

- theme of the text
- character interpretation
- making personal connections between the text and their real lives
- evaluating the conflicts and solutions within the story

Percent of High Vs. Low Questioning Teachers Observed Using Particular Type of Questioning

* Significant difference
**Percent of High Vs. Low Questioning Teachers Observed Using Particular Type of Activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>High QS</th>
<th>Low QS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PicWalk*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predict</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retell</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StLedDsc</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant difference

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**Higher Level Questions to Stretch Children's Thinking**

- If you were the main character, what would you have done the same as that person? What might you have done differently? Why?
- How did the character change during the story?
- What do you think were 3 main ideas (or most important ideas) in this article (for non-fiction)?
- How can you compare something in this story to something that has happened in your life?
- What is a theme of the story? What is the author saying to you?
Activity

- Read “The Lobster and the Crab” from Arnold Lobel’s *Fables*.
- Work with a partner to discuss the differences between the lower level and higher level questions.
- With your partner, generate a different theme for the story and write 3 higher order questions related to your new theme.

Tips for Using Higher Level Questions

- Think of your questions ahead of time.
- Give students time to think.
- Help students clarify their responses.
- Don’t accept one word answers.
Student-Generated Higher Order Questions

• Teach students to write their own higher order questions.
• Have students write their answers to higher level questions before they come to a small group discussion.
• Work towards student-led discussions and not teacher-led recitations.

Ideas for Writing in Response to Literature

• Reader Response Journals
• Writing letters to book characters
• Writing plays or Readers’ Theater scripts
Reader Response Journals

- Write their own stories connecting life experiences to big theme ideas.
- Write about the problem or conflict in the story from an alternative point of view.
- Rewrite the story with an alternate ending.
- Compare and contrast two characters in the book or a character and a person from their real life.
- Stop at specific points in the story to write their thoughts and feelings.
Writing Sample

I'm reading a book called Anastasia On Her Own. The main character in this book is Anastasia. Anastasia is emotional, smart, and responsible.

Anastasia is emotional because in chapter one, she told her parents that in English class a boy called Steve Harvey made fun of her name. Because the teacher was talking about the word Anaesthetic and Steve kept calling her Anaesthetic Krupnik, Anastasia also told her parents that in science class Steve Harvey called her Anaesthmosis Krupnik. Because her science teacher was talking about a body part called Anastomosis. In both these times Anastasia felt sad and embarrassed.

Example of a Self-Evaluation Checklist

Name: ___________________________  Date: ____________
Name of story: ____________________________

Setting:
I began the story with an introduction. _____  ____
I talked about the main character. _____  ____
I talked about the other characters. _____  ____
I told when the story took place. _____  ____
I told where the story took place. _____  ____

Theme:
I told about the problem and the solution. _____  ____
I told how the problem was solved. _____  ____
I told what I thought the author's purpose was for writing this story. _____  ____

Sequence:
I told the story in the correct order that it took place in the story. _____  ____
Instructional Activity

“Book Talk”

- Who is your book about?
- How are you like the character in the book?
- How are you different from the character in the book?
- Tell one thing that happened in the story.
- What was the problem? How did it get solved?
- Do you like the character in the book? Why or why not?
- What is your favorite part of the story? Why?
- This book reminds me of…

Digital Writing

- Author studies:
  - interview an author via Skype
  - post on author blogs
  - read author websites
  - email questions to authors
- Create class blogs or discussion forums with students around the world.
- Write book reviews and post online or email to authors or e-zines.
Example of a Teacher’s Blog

Http://digitalwritingineelementaryschool.blogspot.com/

Developed by Madeleine Israelson, an elementary teacher.

Writing In Response to Informational Texts
Importance of Informational Text

Distribution of Literary and Informational Passages by Grade in the 2009 NAEP Reading Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Literary</th>
<th>Informational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Distribution of Communicative Purposes by Grade in the 2011 NAEP Writing Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>To Persuade</th>
<th>To Explain</th>
<th>To Convey Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Reading Benchmark: Informational Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3.3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause and effect.</td>
<td>5.2.3.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integrate Content Area Reading and Writing

Read a Variety of Informational Texts

- Leveled texts addressing grade level Science, Social Studies, topics
- Online reading and writing
- Magazines
- Brochures

Text Sets: Pairing Literature and Informational Text

- Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl
- Smoke and Ashes: The Story of the Holocaust
Resource for Teachers

Zhang & Duke (2011) WWWDOT Framework for evaluating the trustworthiness of a website:
✓ Who wrote this (and what credentials do they have)?
✓ Why did they write it?
✓ When was it written and updated?
✓ Does this meet my needs?
✓ Organization of site
✓ To-do list for the future

Resources for Teachers

➢ Electronic Library for Minnesota
www.ELM4YOU.ORG
Motivating Students to Read in the Content Areas

- Generate interest in the topic
- Connect the topic to students’ lives outside of school

Writing Sample

I strongly believe that parents should be more responsible. Sometimes parents don’t have time to sit down with their children and help them with homework. Some kids have problems at school about the way they behave because their parents are irresponsible. Another reason why parents should be more responsible is that sometimes children are absent too many times and they are not learning anything.
Motivating Students

- Provide many interesting texts (i.e. websites, magazines, trade books)
- Allow students choice
- Provide time for students to collaborate

Authentic Tasks

- Involve students in important life issues that have real impact on their lives or their world (i.e. recycling in their school, preventing flooding in their town)
- Provide a real audience for their endeavors (i.e. electronic pen pals, letters to the editor, class websites)
Writing Sample

I strongly believe that the troops should come home from the war because their family misses them. Also, people are getting hurt and they are spending billions of dollars on the war. Who would want to go in the army if your family would miss you so much? I remember on the news one day a man from the army visited his daughter at their school and they were crying because he missed her so much.

Another time is when President Bush had a surprise visit in Iraq and brought the troops home, then troops families were crying. Their faces were all red.

Instructional Strategies

Instead of asking students to write reports have them create real world resources:

- Pamphlets/Brochures
- Informational Booklets
- Websites
- Field guides
- Newsletters
- Online Posters
Resource for Teachers

❖ Books of Hope - A service learning program where students in the U.S. write books for students in foreign schools

www.e-luminate.org

Informational Texts

❖ Use collaborative small groups for reading and discussing informational texts (i.e. Reciprocal Teaching, Palincsar & Brown)
Use Graphic Organizers

- Word Webs
- Concept Maps
- T-Charts
- Venn Diagrams
- Story Maps
- K-W-L

Example of a Rubric for Summarizing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Summary offers little or no information about the selection.</td>
<td>• Summary includes details only.</td>
<td>• Summary includes a clear main idea and 1 or 2 supporting details.</td>
<td>• All the main ideas and supporting details are included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Summary is incomplete.</td>
<td>• The main idea is not clearly identified.</td>
<td>• Summary is clear and makes sense.</td>
<td>• Summary shows a high degree of clarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stated ideas do not relate to the selection.</td>
<td>• Summary is incomplete or ideas are incorrect.</td>
<td>• Summary is connected to content from other sources.</td>
<td>• The information in the summary is connected to content from other sources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity

• Read one of the online articles from ELM.
• Work with a partner to develop 3 writing activities that students could do based on the article.
• Share your activity ideas with another pair.

Resources for Teachers


Resources for Teachers


Resources for Teachers

- [http://www.pps.k12.or.us/curriculum/PDFs/ESL_Modifications.pdf](http://www.pps.k12.or.us/curriculum/PDFs/ESL_Modifications.pdf)
- [http://www.bestevidence.org/reading/ell/ell_read.htm](http://www.bestevidence.org/reading/ell/ell_read.htm)
- Minnesota Center for Reading Research [http://www.cehd.umn.edu/reading](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/reading)
- International Reading Association [http://www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)
- Minnesota Reading Association [http://www.mnreading.org](http://www.mnreading.org)