University of Mary Division of Education

Instructional Sequence

**Grade Level**: 3rd

**Subject Area**: Language Arts

**Materials Needed**:

* *Plantzilla* by Jerdine Nolen
* Comprehension Anchor Poster 2 (BLM 2) Texts for Close Reading, page 78

**Standard:**

* SL.3: Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.

**Objectives:**

* Students will identify facts and opinions in a passage.
* Students will identify and use signal words for opinions.
* Students will use the fix-up monitoring strategy to help understand the passage.

**Learning Activities:**

* Read *Plantzilla* using the metacognitive strategy, “Fix-Up Monitoring.”
* Display Poster 2 with fact and opinion sections covered with sticky notes.
* Read aloud the text with students.
* Reread paragraph 1. Think aloud: “In the first paragraph, I didn’t understand what tasty treats have to do with sugar maples. Then I thought about the pancakes I had for breakfast. I put maple syrup on them, and they were delicious. I thin maple syrup is a tasty treat sugar maples provide. I’ll look for facts about maple trees to see if I am correct.
* Reread paragraphs 2 and 3. Think aloud: “I’m not sure I understand why the author wrote about what happens to sugar maples in the different seasons. I’ll reread them, distinguish the facts from the opinions, and then study the facts and think about how they are related. I read that in summer, the tree makes and stores food. The leaves of the tree make the food. In the next paragraph, I read that leaves fall off the tree in the fall. I can relate this fact to facts about leaves making food. Without leaves, the tree cannot make any more food. The tree now has only the stored food. Then I read that the trees are dormant in winter. I think these paragraphs are about the food the maple makes and stores as sugar sap. The sugar sap must have something to do with the tasty treat the maple provides. I’ll read to find out.
* Reread the last paragraph. Think aloud: “This paragraph includes facts explaining that in spring the maple uses stored sap as food for new leaves. It also explains that people collect some of the sap and make maple syrup with it. Now I understand why the author wrote about the maple in different seasons. They help explain how sap becomes available for people to use. Now I know that maple syrup is the tasty treat the first paragraph mentions. Referring to maple syrup as a tasty treat is one opinion I can agree with.
* Say: “Now think about the first paragraph. Which sentences are facts? Which are opinions?
  + Use popsicle sticks to choose the student.
  + If necessary, help students identify the first opinion: Sugar maples are the best trees. Explain that this is an opinion cannot be proven true or false. The word *best* signals that the sentence is an opinion.
* Say: “Let’s look closely to find other opinions in the passage. Which sentences are opinions?
  + Underline all sentences that students identify in blue.
* Say: “Facts can be proven true or false. Let’s find statements in the passage that are facts. What is the first fact you find? How do you know this is a fact?”
  + Underline all sentences that students identify in red.
* Reveal the facts and opinions underneath the sticky notes.
  + Ask: “Did we find all the opinions? Let’s compare sentences.”

**Assessment:**

* Take note of which students can or cannot contribute to the discussion of the Poster 2 facts and opinions.
  + Use learning partners and call on them with popsicle sticks to see who understand the concepts.

**Reflection:**

* I have been in front of classes plenty of times before. I direct a summer program in the summer and I incorporate education with my activities, however teaching explicitly is different. I had never heard of the Fix-Up Monitoring strategy, even though I automatically use it without thinking, so I had to use some question prompts while reading. I wish I would have planned out what exact questions I was going to ask while reading. Also, the mother in the story’s handwriting was difficult to read at a read-aloud angle! I realized that I was not as good as explain scientific things as I thought I was, as my read aloud was scientific as well as the poster. Overall, the kids liked the story however!
* I learned that the poster is not my style. I liked that the language arts resource book allows for flexibility, as I will practice it in my next lessons. I figured for my first one, I should follow what they have and that would make it easier. However, if I really plan something out myself, I invest in it more and therefore prepare for it better. In addition, I do not do well reading off a script. I get really choppy. That goes the same for explaining things. That is a weakness that I need to work on.
* Overall, for my first lesson, I think it went well. The students were engaged even though I was not able to explain some things as well as I would have liked to. I am still upset that I have to teach three language arts lessons and as a transfer student not completely in Block 1, I was advised to take Earth Science instead of Language Arts Methods since they are at the same time. I am the only one in this position and believe that I am at a disadvantage. I wish we had a little more flexibility. I can’t wait for tomorrow’s lesson though because I came up with it on my own with the help of a book choice by Mrs. Eder! The kids better like it because I drove all the way to the Mandan library to get it ;).