Seventh Grade Common Core Language Arts Reading Session 7

*Sample mentor comments are represented in italics throughout the lesson plan.*

Focus: Good readers use information from the text to support its main ideas and show how ideas and themes unfold throughout a text. They summarize the main idea of a text without adding their own ideas or opinions and analyze how different parts of a “story” affect each other.

Good readers make connections and use sensory details to enhance understanding.

Materials: three by five cards, journal, pen/pencil, kitchen timer, one small envelope to hold the 3 x 5 cards per participant, glue stick

Genre: fiction/non-fiction, writing to be read

 Before Reading:

1. Establish rapport. See early sessions. It is important to forge a positive and on-going relationship with the student.
2. *Today we are going to use the skills we practiced last week of making connections text to text, text to self, and text to world and creating sensory images to create a piece of writing.*
3. Each participant, mentor and student(s), will need six three by five cards, optimally of different colors, and a writing implement. You will be doing a good bit of writing, so several sharpened pencils are better than one.

During writing:

1. *Today we are going to be free writing. Free writing is writing as fast as you can for a short period of time, maybe 2 1/2 to 3 minutes. We will use a different card each time we write. We will not talk while we write. We will stretch and force ourselves to write about whatever comes to our minds, even if what comes to our minds changes as we write and becomes off the original topic. We will not stop writing for the short period we are writing. After each card, we will talk about what we wrote, so we know we will get to talk in just a moment, and we can wait for that moment. So, if there is anything that might interrupt our writing, we should take care of it now. What might that be (water, bathroom visit, need for tissue, sharpened pencils, etc.)* Use the kitchen timer to time each brief session. This activity will take the entire hour.
2. Salmon card #1. *On the first card, brainstorm (write down any and every thing) specific about an event, person, place, thing important to you or about a subject on which you are an authority. Don’t use sentences, just list. Fill the card up, write on the back if you need to. Write small so that you can write a lot. Remember to use sensory images and to make connections between your person, place, thing, object, subject, etc. Ready? Start!* Brainstorm for 4 minutes. Prewriting.
3. Share with a partner. The partner will ask the reader, “What appeared on the page that you did not expect?” Talk for 2-3 minutes. Pick what surprised you or interested you about your writing. Talk for 1-2 minutes.
4. Blue card #2. Chose a new card. Read over your writing on the first card. Continue free writing from where you left off for 3 minutes. Freewriting.
5. Share with a partner. The partner will ask the reader, “What do you intend to do with this writing next?” Use 3-4 minutes.
6. Yellow card #3. On the third card, pick one point from your brainstorming and develop it, continue on, or make a completely new start. Use 3 minutes. Rewriting.
7. Share with a partner and ask your listener, “What is my piece of writing telling you? Use 3-4 minutes.
8. Green card # 4. On the fourth card change the point of view (who is doing the talking in the writing), continue writing where you left off on the third card, or make a new start. Use 3 minutes. Rewriting.
9. Share with a partner and ask your listener, “What do my readers need to know about my topic that I haven’t told them yet? Use 3-4 minutes.
10. Pink card #5. Reread your writing. Add sensory details. Make connections text to text, text to self, and/or text to world. Continue on or make a new start. Use three minutes. Rewriting.
11. Share with a partner and ask, “What questions do you have of me about this writing?” Use 3-4 minutes.
12. White card #6. Reread all of your cards and pick the one you think is the best. Add details or finish the writing. Use 3 minutes. Editing.
13. Read your final card to a partner. Discuss the main idea of your piece and what details help your reader discover and understand your main idea. Use 4 minutes.

After reading and writing:

1. How did this activity help us understand making connections and using sensory details? How did your partner’s sensory details and connections help you understand the main idea of his/her piece of writing? How difficult/easy was this activity? Was it easier to use sensory details and to make connections text to text, text to self, and text to world as you wrote? Share.
2. Insert the cards in the envelope, Glue the envelope into the journal.
3. This activity can produce a super listing poem, even for students who think they cannot write or cannot write poetry.

 Closing:

Talk about what went well today and what you enjoyed. Talk about how closely reading and writing are connected. Today we used writing to support what we were learning about reading.

Reference earlier sessions for additional closing activities to complete before leaving the building. Thank you for your time and talent.

FYI: This activity is often titled “Murray Cards.” It was developed by Donald Murray.