Seventh Grade Common Core Language Arts Reading Session 28

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

Focus: Good readers know it is their job to monitor their comprehension. They know when they are making sense of their reading, and they know when they are confused. Good readers recognize how authors use historical source material

Materials: 7th grade reading textbook, journal, pen/pencil, post-it notes, two each of two different-colored highlighters, copies of “The Charge of the Light Brigade” without sidebar notes

Genre: epic poetry, self-monitoring comprehension during reading

Before reading:

1. Enhance rapport. Catch up with events. Teachers of reading read. Share what you are reading.
2. Point out athletes, musicians, political candidates, and other well-known people who in order to be successful at what they do must check their thinking while doing their “thing.”
3. Help the student recognize six signals that indicate confusion (paraphrased from Cris Tovani. *I Read It, But I Don’t Get It. 48)* by copying them into his/her journal as note-making.
4. The inner voice inside the reader’s head stops thinking and making connections. The reader is only pronouncing words.
5. The reader stops visualizing, stops making pictures in the mind.
6. Making connections is good, but the reader’s mind begins to wander away from the text.
7. The reader cannot retell what was read.
8. The reader can’t answer his/her own questions about the text.
9. Characters are reappearing in the text and the reader doesn’t know who they are

*We talked about making connections, visualizing, and retelling in earlier sessions. If all we are hearing as we read is our voices reciting the words, we aren’t thinking. Reading is about more than pronouncing words correctly. Reading is about thinking and figuring out what the text means. Good readers bring themselves back to the text when one of the signals above occurs.*

During and after reading:

1. Read *Beowulf*, a challenging text, from the 7th grade reading textbook together. Explain that *Beowulf* is an epic poem. *We took notes on epic poetry yesterday. Our text defines an epic poem as “a long, narrative poem, often written in formal language that tells about a series of quests, or journeys, undertaken by a great hero… [who has] great superhuman strength…encounters strange creatures… [and completes] tasks or dangerous battles” 675.*
2. There are two purposes for reading. Share them with the student.
3. To teach the student how to put a post-it note next to a passage that causes confusion so he/she can return to it later to simplify it, and
4. To examine characteristics of epic poetry.
5. Caution: Do not preview the reading by telling the student what happens in the poem. Read the text silently the first time. Ask the student “What happened in this poem?” (The student will probably have some questions. That’s good. Good readers know that if they are hopelessly stuck, they can ask an expert questions. They are using that strategy.)
6. Do not give the students the answers to the questions just yet. Give the student several sticky notes, and ask him/her to reread the poem silently and to put the sticky note at that point in the poem and to describe their confusion in writing on the note. The mentor completes the same activity. “*Find a confusing part, mark it, and describe what [you] didn’t understand or why [you] lost meaning.”* (Tovani 40) The mentor shares a place in the text where he/she got confused. Share what you wrote on the sticky note and
7. Answer the questions in the sidebars of the text, pp. 676 and 677.
8. Recall “Who is Hrogthar?”
9. Explain “Why has Beowulf come to see Hrogthar?”
10. Explain “How does Beowulf try to convince Hrothgar that he is the one for the job?”
11. Review the characteristics of an epic poem by constructing a chart as below in the journal. Have the student return to his/her notes to construct the chart or turn to page 675 or the glossary in the textbook for characteristics to complete the chart.

Characteristics of Examples from

An Epic Poem *Beowulf*

Find the characteristics Look to the poem

in the student’s journal for information to

notes or in the textbook complete this portion

on page 583 or in the of the chart.

glossary.

1. For the second monitoring activity, read “The Charge of the Light Brigade” in the reading

text, pages 584-586. Make two copies of the text so that the student and the mentor may highlight as they read. There are three purposes for reading. Share them with the student.

1. To teach the student to highlight in one color areas they “get” and could explain to another and to highlight areas where they are confused, and
2. To create a story map for a narrative poem
3. To scan or analyze the rhythm of the poem
4. Read the poem the first time straight through for the flow. Read the poem a second time,

highlighting every word in the text with one color where the text is understood well enough to explain it to someone else. Where there is a portion the reader does not understand, highlight in a second color.

1. Read the poem a third time, taking turns explaining and asking questions. Create a story map,

graphic organizer attached, for the poem. Use the strategy of putting an elbow on the desk and holding the chin in the hand to determine stressed and unstressed syllables in the text. Use the journal for record-keeping.

After reading:

In the journal write a twenty-five word retelling of each poem, using exactly twenty-five words.

Revise as needed. Share, showing drafts and final product.

Closing:

1. Complement your work together. Students rarely see teachers read something for the first

time. It is okay for students to see teachers, skilled readers, confused or puzzled, so that they understand that even skilled readers encounter difficulties (paraphrased from Thomas Newkirk. *Slow Reading.* 135-137.

1. Complete additional closing activities as outlined in Session One. Thank you for your time and

talent.