

DOINGWHATWORKS



Presentation

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Teaching Character and Setting in an Inclusion Classroom

Lake Forest North Elementary School, Delaware • October 2010

Topic: Improving K-3 Reading Comprehension

Practice: Focus on Text Structure

Highlights

- Cindy Burke, kindergarten teacher at Lake Forest North Elementary School, describes how she taught character and setting in her inclusion classroom.
- Burke describes how she used a graphic organizer in teaching and assessing her students.
- She reflects on her students' performance and describes next steps that she will take.

About the Site

Lake Forest North Elementary School

Felton, Delaware

Demographics

71% White

23% Black

4% Hispanic

1% Asian

53% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

1% English Language Learners

13% Special Education

Lake Forest North's data-driven culture drives every aspect of the school. Administrators and instructional support staff work closely with teachers to ensure that each classroom offers heterogeneous instructional practices.

- Strategies like whole-group read-alouds and partner sharing, graphic organizers, and modeling and strategy explanation help students understand text structure.
- Comprehension instruction includes an emphasis on what good readers do and the strategies they use.
- Grade-level articulation meetings are held weekly with the reading coach for the purposes of collaborative planning and data review.
- Teachers build on student development of comprehension strategies across grade levels.
- Teachers are provided opportunities to observe peer instruction to better understand student learning in previous grades and comprehension goals in future grades.
- The principal provides strong leadership and motivates teachers to sustain effective comprehension practices, for example, through the use of classroom walk-throughs.
- Targeted professional development is created from benchmark assessment data for improving teaching skills.

Full Transcript

Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to Teaching Character and Setting in an Inclusion Classroom.

Slide 2: Introducing Cindy Burke

My name is Cindy Burke. I am a kindergarten inclusion teacher at Lake Forest North, here in Felton, Delaware.

Slide 3: Lesson planning considerations

I have 18 children in my classroom, seven of which are special needs. And of course, when I am planning any lesson, I have to take their needs into consideration. Some of the things I do consider when I'm creating

a lesson is I have to allow for many times to summarize the lessons. They also—I find that special needs students need a lot of visuals, and they also need that motivation to stay on task.

Slide 4: Components of the lesson

The lesson today was on character and setting, and I started the lesson out by trying to draw on experience the children had to relate to an experience that the little girl would have in the story of the book. And I had asked them to imagine in their minds a time when they received a surprise, or their parents, when they came home from school, their parents told them about something special that was going to happen, because it's the story today, the little girl also was going to receive a surprise. And after that, I introduced the new vocabulary and being sure to use pictures so that the children would have a better understanding of the vocabulary words. Following that, we did an interactive read-aloud, and I had set the purpose so the children would know that we were looking at setting and character. And at the end of our story, we again talked about the setting, the character. Then I had the children break into small groups, and they were to either illustrate a character or setting from the story. And following that, we would get back together and then we would put our story map together.

Slide 5: Goal of the lesson

My goal for today was vocabulary development. It was also to review character, some of the character that we had had in a previous lesson, and then to do a little more work with setting, because we had touched on setting but it really had not been formally taught.

Slide 6: Assessing learning

The student product will be the main way I will assess the lesson. When they came up to the story map and they had their illustration:

- Did their illustration—was it an illustration of what they were supposed to illustrate?
- And also when they were asked to place their illustration on the story map, did they know where it went?
- And when I listened to their explanation of what they drew, did they include the character in there, did they include the illustration?

Slide 7: Differentiating instruction: Reteaching

And that's when I noticed there were—I had a couple of my special needs students who I think were totally

missing the mark. So that was my clue that they needed more opportunities to work with that skill. When I am writing my plans for our next lesson that I have to consider that I need to go back and do a little more reteaching, that they probably need those skills readdressed. So I need to find time in my day, in the next few days, that I will readdress, go back to the skill, in a text that is more familiar to them. And then we'll talk more about the character and then move on to the setting.

Sometimes, when you may think they have got it, then you find out they don't. And I did notice today the words *where* and *who*, that they weren't quite picking up on these words. So there's two words that I know I need to work with a lot more with those students.

Slide 8: Differentiating instruction: Practice

For the other students, give them opportunity to use that setting (because I felt that they were strong with the character), to use the setting in other familiar stories. Perhaps we'll go back, and we'll have them choose one of their favorite stories and let them illustrate the setting from that story, apply it to other stories.

Slide 9: Motivating students

What I am most happy about is I like the way that they are motivated. I think that the classroom has a very positive atmosphere. I think they enjoy the interaction. I think, many of the steps that I'm modeling, that they want to do that; they want to do what I'm doing, and that gives them the motivation to participate, to listen. I like the idea of the story map. I like that because it is a visual, and I think it does help the children; it helps them to learn the concepts that I want them to learn in a fun, motivating way.

Slide 10: Learn more

To learn more about Teaching Character and Setting in an Inclusion Classroom, explore the additional resources on the Doing What Works website.