DOINGWHATWORKS

Presentation

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Explicit Teaching in the Fifth-Grade Math Core

John Wash Elementary School, California • March 2010

Topic: Response to Intervention in Elementary-Middle Math
Practice: Intentional Teaching

Highlights

- Jennifer Dodd, a fifth-grade teacher at John Wash Elementary School, demonstrates teaching fractions in the core math curriculum.
- She describes explicit teaching, including how she teaches first, asks a question, pauses, and picks a volunteer to answer.
- She teaches problem-solving steps and scaffolds student learning.
- She engages students through a partner sharing activity, asking partners to share answers and explain how they found the answer.
- Whiteboards are used throughout a lesson to check for understanding.
- Ms. Dodd discusses grade-level use of common assessments and the reteaching process.

About the Site

John Wash Elementary School

Fresno, CA

Demographics

41% Hispanic
37% Asian
18% White
2% Black
1% Other
53% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
22% English Language Learners
4% Special Education

John Wash Elementary School staff work collaboratively to improve teaching and learning. Through principal leadership, district support, and professional development, John Wash established:

- A three-tiered pyramid of instruction and intervention;
- Systematic and explicit instructional practices that support and engage all students, including English language learners;
- Professional learning communities for using data and planning evidence-based instruction;
- Systems of mutual accountability for student learning.

Full Transcript

Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to Explicit Teaching in the Fifth-Grade Math Core.

Slide 2: Introducing Jennifer Dodd

My name is Jennifer Dodd, and I teach fifth grade here at John Wash Elementary School. Our learning objective is that we will divide by a fraction, and we try and build on what we are doing from the days before. So the kids had seen some of the vocabulary, so making sure we taught the mathematical vocabulary of what's a reciprocal, what is a divisor, that's a big part of our planning, too. What specific vocabulary do those kids, especially our English learners, what do they need to know in this lesson?

Slide 3: Explicit teaching

We need to be specific and actually teach definitions and teach the concept before we teach how to do that concept. We are explicitly teaching a concept to our students. It's very direct in what's being said,

and there is also another acronym that we use, called TAPPLE*, where we Teach first; we don't want our students to either get a wrong impression or hear a wrong answer first, so we teach first. Then we Ask a question, we Pause and then Pick a volunteer, because especially those EL students need wait time to process and to think about, what is she asking me, how can I answer that, how can I put that in a complete sentence.

Slide 4: Scaffolding problem solving

So we did—to break down how to divide a fraction—we did step one: make sure you write your problem clearly, even something as simple as that, it might end up messing up our computation. So just step by step, write your problem clearly and then going through each step, "Oh I need to find the divisor and find the reciprocal of that divisor."

Slide 5: Student engagement

We do a lot of partner sharing. They turn to their partner and they have to explain not only what their answer is, but why they chose that answer. How did you get that answer? Why did you get that answer? And especially you find with English language learners that when they have a chance to discuss with their partner first, they are able to think about that answer, process the information.

Slide 6: Checking for understanding

The kids have their own individual whiteboards, and it's instant checking for understanding. I can walk around by the end of the lesson and know who needs to be pulled for a small group, and I can kind of jot those kids down through the skill development steps. Our goal is to get 80 percent of our kids to be able do the work independently, and then we can pull a group for that last 20 percent. And if it's not, if only 50 percent of the kids got it, then we can go back and reteach, which I have had to do. Go back to concept development, hit what are we doing, what does this mean again, go back to our steps, do that again, and go to that second part again until 80 percent of our kids feel like they can do it independently.

Slide 7: Regrouping students

We test as a grade level and then we do smart goals, where we sit down with all the data of our tests. That way we can see these kids passed, these kids did not, and after that assessment we pull those kids in small group. We may even change classrooms; if there were only five students through all of fifth grade, only one

* *TAPPLE: T(each) A(sk a question) P(ause) P(ick a non-volunteer) L(isten to answer) E(laborate or move on)*

teacher will pull those kids and the other teacher can pull kids for another standard they need help with, and then we can reteach and reassess because we want them to be successful in that skill.

Slide 8: Teacher collaboration

All of our lessons and our common assessments come from planning together. So as a grade level, there is myself and another fifth-grade teacher, and at least once a week when we have meetings, we sit down and we do all of our planning together, our preparation together. We can go over what steps we need to do and think about, "Okay, if I am doing this myself, what do I need to do to accomplish this task?"

Slide 9: Ongoing teacher training

We went through a lot of training to learn how to do this. We have been working on it for four years, and we have to be open to change and be flexible in learning things and think how can I apply this in my classroom. And so lots of training and lots of practice, implementing a few steps at a time and then building on that. And we watched other teachers teach lessons in our own school to see and learn from them, so that was helpful, but it's not an overnight process of how to do it.

Slide 10: Learn more

To learn more about Explicit Teaching in the Fifth-Grade Math Core, please explore the additional resources of the Doing What Works website.