**Grade 4 Reflection**

September 28, 2011

One of the areas I will focus on this Fall is:

* the Mill Girls book and how to expand it beyond just social studies and into reading, because I am realizing how important it is to ensure that students are exposed to more expository reading. 50-50 reading of fiction texts as well as expository texts.
* using prompts to help guide students’ discussion of text, because students are able to use higher level thinking skills to dig much deeper into texts.
* to align my reading objectives with the Iowa Core, because this will help me focus my instruction.
* keeping running records every two weeks for below grade level students, because it gives a more accurate record of the student’s reading growth.
* retelling, because I think it is very important for the kids to be able to give me details about their text and to see what they remember. I also am happy to see samples of things others are using. Great way to share!
* expanding social studies into the reading curriculum with the Mill Girls and other 5.5 texts, because I feel that it will teach the students how to expand their critical thinking, increase their ability to build background knowledge, and promote success in the Core standards. Thanks – many great ideas!
* using more informational texts for instruction and guided reading, because we learned (and were shown) a lot of great ways to use these texts in a cross-curricular way, as well as using them to match up with the Core Curriculum.
* creating meaningful ways to assess and teach informational text, because this is important throughout all curricular areas, not just reading. Students will show greater progress through authentic learning and assessments. I can use the ideas I gained through working with the 4th grade team today!
* Guided Reading – comprehension and student conferencing – because I have more resources this year and experience. I have a large range of student levels. I want to start conferencing more this year so I know where my students are.
* continuing to work on ways to assess the students, because we need to track progress and the achievement of the kids. I also want to work on the ways I approach the group work with the kids.
* going away from being so focused on comprehension strategies and bringing more reading skills (use assessments for Iowa Core), because there are so many areas of being a reader besides comprehending. Not every student needs comprehension practice. Also, I plan to implement more retelling practice.
* teaching skills coupled with strategies during reading, because I have a broader range of reading abilities than I’ve ever had before. Simply teaching the comprehension strategies won’t cut it this year.
* Focus on Focus, because working on life skills for success is the greatest service we can do. It gives them power. I will investigate Tools for the Mind, Amazon Prime, and will use Cobblestone Mill Girls much better from your suggestions.
* keeping the Common Core in mind when I plan my lessons, because it will help me (and the other 4th grade teachers) map out our assessments to align with the Common Core standards – we won’t have to re-create everything.
* integrating the new social studies curriculum unto our reading, because there are many ways to incorporate the nonfiction content into our reading. Also, looking at what we teach and how it aligns with the Iowa Core.
* utilizing the curriculum guide as outlined, because it provides an organized approach to instruction of standards and benchmarks. The guide also provides resources that can be used. I will also be reviewing Core requirements to align my instruction to what will be needed.
* looking at the assessments I use (or need to look for and implement), because in order to align my teaching with the Iowa Core standards, I need to be able to assess the skills taught effectively.
* looking at our curriculum binder to hold myself accountable for what needs to be taught, because it’s important for the students’ understanding and maintaining their focus. Also for meeting the learning target I’ve set for my students.
* reconfirming alignment between activities, objectives and assessments, because as my units evolve over the years I move away from conscious focus on my objectives. I need to check back yearly – begin with objectives.
* retellings in fiction and informational text (trying rubric for both), because retelling is a more effective post reading activity than teacher questioning.
* implementing the new social studies curriculum, because I need to incorporate it into my reading curriculum.