**Grade 5 Reflection**

October 4, 2011

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

* using more informational texts in science and social studies in a meaningful way, because it is important for students to make connections with comprehension strategies/skills from reading and applying it to the different informational texts.
* doing a better job of integrating social studies and science into literacy time, because there’s so much content and not enough time. It makes sense because there’s so much reading involved in both content areas.
* determining the best assessments for common core standards, because I understand that this will be the best way to know my students as readers, writers, and speakers. I will have more to “back up” my grading on report cards.
* more talk time with kids discussing their reading with each other, because sometimes I talk too much thinking I’m pouring knowledge into their heads - ha. It also helps make them more accountable to discuss with their group.
* using more informational text – integrating reading lessons and social studies – because I know it is important to do at least 50% informational reading.
* continuing to relate my teaching to essential questions and connect it to Iowa Core, because this will keep my teaching specific and purposeful. In addition, it will allow me to deeply “dive” into the learning targets of my weekly/daily lessons.
* including more time for students to have oral conversations, because it is important for kids to verbalize their thinking and learning. This allows them to discover new ideas and explore concepts at a deeper level. It also allows them to clarify their learning.
* including more time for student oral response, because it is important for them to verbalize their learning. When they discuss ideas/content together, students are able to clarify and deepen their understanding. As a teacher, I can also assess their level of comprehension.
* aligning the Iowa Core Standards with unit assessments, because I need to be held accountable to the students and parents as to what the expectations will be.
* integrating a central question within each social studies unit, because it will pertain to a central theme students can relate with, and they can form a new perspective on the question as we dive further into a unit.
* how to integrate the Core Curriculum into science, this is an area I could beef up. I know I do it, but just laying it out to show it.
* using the Core standards to inform my instruction, because we are going to continue to discuss these standards and how they will improve students’ learning. We are already using many activities that align with the Core, but we want to continue to improve!
* balancing 50/50 the reading time between informational and narrative text, because this will better prepare students for the content area reading that is the focus of the upper grades.
* using additional resources to provide students with a variety of informational text, because students should be assessed with 50% informational text in 5th grade.
* using more informational texts in both the content areas and the reading curriculum, because when I look at the percentages (50/50) of how much should be informational, it is clear that I am only doing a fraction of what I should be. I also like the idea of focusing longer on more difficult texts and digging into the vocabulary.
* helping students focus on the focus, because a classroom with students focused on what needs to be focused on is a healthy and effective classroom. The main thing is the main thing.
* developing and refining of instruction and assessments related to Common Core – beefing up reading in social studies – because it is required, but it is also good sound teaching. It gives an incredible, strong curriculum and guide to go by.
* exposing the children to tons of nonfiction text and really expect deeper thinking (more communication), because the more we do this the better they become.
* making connections between science/social studies and reading instruction, because when we make those extensions, we are enriching our students’ learning experiences with multiple exposures across subject areas.
* teaching ELL students and teaching kids who live in poverty, because they are the majority of the population at our school and they encompass 100% of the population of students with whom I work directly.
* using language from the Common Core in reading instruction, because it is important for students to hear and understand the vocabulary in the Common Core that they will be expected to be successful with.
* using the descriptors of the Common Core to guide instruction, because this is the direction we are moving and my students need to be able to demonstrate these skills.
* reading more informational text with all students, because 50% of reading we assess is informational.
* not focusing on memorization of facts but the executive function, because our world has changed and my teaching needs to change as well.
* to really implement all components into my reading block daily and make sure they all connect, because it is important for students to focus and be able to master the strategies being taught by several exposures.
* adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of ESL students, because these students are still struggling with narrative texts at L level and expository texts in the curriculum are much higher than that.