
June 17, 2011

Reader's Theater Writing Lesson Plan

Rationale:

The purpose of this lesson plan is to familiarize students with fables, improve reading fluency, and improve revision writing technique of high school and GED students by allowing students to present a fable as reader's theater as well as revise collaboratively and present their contemporary revisions as reader's theater.

Objective:

1. Each student will be able to identify a fable and its origin.
2. Each student will be able to present a fable in reader's theater format with fluency and expression.
3. Each student will be able to revise and write collaboratively a contemporary revision of a fable.
4. Each student will be able to present a contemporary revision based on a fable in reader's theater format with fluency and expression.

Materials:

1. Four copies of traditional fables and folk tales
Pecos Bill (American), Native American Folk Tale, The Man Who Never Lied (African folk
Grasshopper and the Ant (Aesop's fables)
2. Readers Theater Evaluation form.

Procedures:

Session 1.

1. Introduce Reader's Theater to the class. Give an overview of what it is, how it will be used, and what it can assist the reader in the classroom. Give students an overview of Aaron Shepard's "RT Tips: A Guide to Reader's Theater," provides ideas for presentation. Encourage students to apply these strategies to their presentation. Explain to students that they will revise the fable into a contemporary setting and present the story as a Readers Theater.
2. Introduce the Readers Theater Evaluation form and discuss how the form will be used by students to assess each other's performance.
3. Place students in groups to work with selected scripts and allow students to read the original form of the fable. Allow students to select a role.
4. Suggest students use a highlighter to highlight roles on the fable page. Suggest students use a different color highlighter, however, this could be optional.

5. Provide time for the groups to practice reading through the fables. Observe and give assistance as needed.

6. In groups of four, or as many are necessary, students take turns presenting their scripts in front of the class.

7. Conduct a class discussion on ways that the presenters could make their performance more enjoyable for the audience.

Session 2.

1. Explain that students will now create their own story by collaboratively revising their fable into a contemporary script.

2. Discuss the following script roles:

Narrator(s), character(s), silent character(s), sound effects person(s)

3. Demonstrate how to identify the specific roles for the selected script. Distinguish between narration and dialogue. Characters read what is inside the quotation marks and narrators read all other material.

4. On a sample script or on an overhead/Elmo, read through a sample script and have students identify who is reading each part of the text.

5. Ask students to return to their originally assigned groups for a collaborative revision of their assigned fable.

6. Direct students to identify the roles in their script. Suggest students use highlighters to identify their specific roles.

7. After the revision is complete and roles have been identified and assigned, students should re-read to avoid overlooking roles.

8. Allow time for students to practice their new roles.

Session 3.

1. Have the groups read their scripts in front of the class. If any group members did not have the opportunity to perform during Session 1, they should perform in Session 2.

2. Both students and teacher use the Readers Evaluation form to assess each group's performance.

Extensions:

1. Discuss various topics for students to write a Readers Theater.

2. Suggest a list of plays for students to read and adapt to their class.

Conclude the lesson by asking students to rate classroom improvement in reading fluency. Ask students if their revisions made the original fable/folk tale more meaningful to them.

Assessment:

Assess student copies of scripts to be certain that text was appropriately formatted for the performance.

Use the Readers Theater Evaluation form to assess student performance.

Each student should complete the Readers Evaluation Form to self-assess their own performance.

English/Language Arts Standards with performance indicators

I. Writing

A. Compose a variety of texts that demonstrate clear focus, the logical development of ideas in well-organized paragraphs, and the use of appropriate language that advances the author's purpose.

5. Edit writing for proper voice, tense, and syntax, assuring that it conforms to standard English, when appropriate.

II. Reading

A. Locate explicit textual information, draw complex inferences, and analyze and evaluate the information within and across texts of varying lengths.

1. Use effective reading strategies to determine a written work's purpose and intended audience.

c. Reread to deepen understanding of a text's literal and figurative meaning.

e. When appropriate, make connections between a text and current historical events.

D. Explain how literary and other texts evoke personal experience and reveal character in particular historical circumstances.

2. Analyze the influence of myths, fables, folktales, and classical literature from a variety of world cultures on later literature and film.

a. Analyze how texts influence other texts, especially from another era, in terms of such elements as style, theme, and use of mythology.

III. Speaking

A. Understand the elements of communication both in informal group discussions and formal presentations (e.g., accuracy, relevance, rhetorical features, organization of information).

2. Adjust presentation (delivery, vocabulary, length) to particular audiences and purposes.

B. Develop effective speaking styles for both group and one-on-one situations.

2. Participate actively and effectively in group discussions.

IV. Listening

A. Apply listening skills as an individual and as a member of a group in a variety of settings (e.g., lectures, discussions, conversations, team projects, presentations, interviews).

1. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of a public presentation.

Cross Disciplinary Standards with performance indicators

I. Key Cognitive Skills

E. Work habits

2. Work collaboratively.

b. Distinguish between situations where collaborative work is appropriate and where it is not.

II. Foundational Skills

A. Reading across the curriculum

2. Evaluate sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance.

a. Use context clues, definitions, examples, comparison, contrast, cause and effect, and details provided in surrounding text.

b. Consult references (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus) effectively.