

Project II: Mentor Text Study

Emily Osburn & Barb Wheeler

ENG 302-01

April 16, 2014

Part I: Selection and Evaluation of Children's Literature

My First Day by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

The illustrations are very creative: detailed paper cutouts. They enrich the text very well because the book is about the beginning of different animals' lives. After exploring Steve Jenkins' website, I have found him to be very credible. He takes the time to research information and pictures for his stories. Jenkins' focuses his efforts on non-fiction literature for children. This particular book examines the first day of newborn animals. It covers a variety of animals: kiwi, blue wildebeest, zebra, Darwin's frog, musk ox, etc. The text shows the variety in which animals are born and what responsibilities they have once born. It also conveys how different animals require parents, while other do not. For example, most animals are cared for by his or her mother. But, the Darwin's frog is cared for by his father while the leatherback turtle is on its own. This shows children the vast differences in animals and, therefore, I think this text is of high quality. Lastly, the book is very authentic because of the factual information and realistic illustrations. The back of the book even has additional information on each animal discussed in the book. Each page has a few sentences with fairly easy vocabulary, which makes this book readable for children.

Down, Down, Down: A Journey to the Bottom of the Sea by Steve Jenkins

In this book, the illustrations support the text greatly because of the vivid images of sea creatures. The sea is explored in throughout the book, one zone at a time. At each zone within the sea, unique creatures are shown and described. Again, the author is very credible because of his research about the sea and his detailed images of each creature

discussed in the book. The book doesn't show any bias because it talks about many different creatures at various depths of the ocean. By reading the text and looking at the illustrations, the audience will learn about what creatures live in the ocean and where they reside. Most people, especially children, aren't familiar with the sea. For this reason, the book itself is that much more fascinating for children and adults alike. Although there is a wealth of information given, it's definitely age appropriate and readable for children.

Sisters & Brothers by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Sisters & Brothers contains realistic illustrations of various species. The illustrations depict many different animals, all of which have special relationships with their siblings and/or primary caregiver. Interestingly enough, not all animals in this world have the same relationship with siblings. The text discusses how some siblings work together in order to find food or practice particular skills. Other siblings fight with each other and even go as far as eating their siblings! The author, Steve Jenkins, is very credible considering the research he partakes in for the animals displayed in this book. He gives credit to the texts that provided him with the information to write this book. At the end of the book, Steve even offers additional facts about the animals discussed in the text. The text couples with the illustrations well because it elaborates on each of the different animals shown. The book is definitely readable and it'll grasp the attention of its readers because of the special relationships various species have with their siblings. The book will be very relatable for children who have siblings. Lastly, this particular book fits with the text because of its factual information about different animals in our world.

How to Clean a Hippopotamus by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Symbiosis, the relationship between animals, is the focus of this book. The illustrations show a variety of species and the relationships they hold with others. The animals are in proportion with each other and each relationship is shown in the illustrations as described by the text. Again, Steven Jenkins and his wife Robin Page complete research in order to accurately represent the symbiotic relationships within this book. The illustrations definitely enhance the text because the reader can actually see how certain animals help other animals in order to survive. The text is readable and can be understood by children because of the brief sentences about each symbiotic relationship. The book has a great deal of information, but it offers an assortment of relationships between animals, which students should begin to recognize. This relates very well to the non-fiction genre because the text explains actual relationships between animals in nature.

Bones by Steve Jenkins

As the title states, bones are the focus in this book. The illustrations are of many different types of bones within all sorts of animals. Each bone is labeled with the animal it originates from and the type of bone it is. Every page is also labeled with the size of the bones in relation to the actual size, which is very helpful to the reader. Steve Jenkins gives a special thanks to Darrin Lunde, a collections manager at the American Museum of Natural History. Darrin helped consult this book in order for such accurate illustrations. The text describes categories of bones that animals have. The illustrations tie in very well with the text because it shows accurate images of the bones being

discussed. The book itself is very interesting and readable for children. Children will definitely be interested in the book because bones are very important to every animal. As the book addressed, without bones, animals wouldn't be able to function. This book fits into the non-fiction genre because of the factual information and illustrations about bones.

Prehistoric Actual Size by Steve Jenkins

This particular book emphasizes the actual size of creatures that lived before us humans. The illustrations give a sense of what they looked like and how big they were in relation to each other. The author, Steve Jenkins, gives additional information about each creature at the end of the book. Clearly, he has done his research in order to produce this book by the depth he goes into with the size of creatures and the information he gives about each one. The text examines each pre-historic creature that is illustrated in the book. Next to every creature, its age and size is given. There are a sentence or two about each creature; therefore, this book is readable for children. It will keep the interest of the reader because of the fascinating creatures that are explored in this book. The vast size difference compared to current animals is absolutely amazing! Even though these pre-historic creatures have never been seen before, fossils help humans identify them. This book fits into the genre of non-fiction because of the science behind each creature's discovery due to fossils.

Life on Earth: The Story of Evolution by Steve Jenkins

The illustrations align with the text and the progression of the story. Since this book is about evolution, it shows many different species, the landscape of Earth over time, and the scientist who discovered the theory of evolution: Charles Darwin. The author, Steve Jenkins, provides a bibliography in the back of the book and a list of text for further reading. This shows his dedication and research in order to produce Life on Earth: The Story of Evolution. The text provides information about the origin of life. Starting from before life even existed all the way to the occurrence of humans on Earth. The illustrations match the text well because Jenkins provides significant dates throughout the book and explains their relevance with the inclusion of an image. I really like the timeline he provides showing the history of Earth if it were shoved into a 24-hour period. The book is readable for older students and gives the reader a quality set of scientific vocabulary in regards to evolution. Lastly, this book fits the scientific, non-fiction genre because it discusses factual information about Earth's history and how it has made drastic changes over time. This book offers an overview of life on Earth that students will be able to mentally grasp, which is why I really enjoy this particular book.

The Beetle Book by Steve Jenkins

This book provides very detailed illustrations of various beetles, which is what the book is about. The pictures are of many different beetles from various locations around the world so I would consider the book to be multicultural. It offers a zoomed in drawing of each beetle and then a silhouette its actual size. The book discusses different aspects of

beetles: what they are, why they're special, their senses, battles between beetles, growth, what they eat, etc. The illustrations relate directly to the types of beetles that apply to the aspect being described on the page. Again, the author provides a bibliography of the text he used to write this book. The book is readable for children because it has small descriptions of each beetle discussed; there aren't any complex vocabulary words either. It fits the scientific, non-fiction genre because beetles are real creatures and many people have observed their habits discussed within this book.

Deserts (True Books: Ecosystems) by Peter Benoit

The illustrations in the text are real-life pictures relating to what the text discusses. They show a variety plants, insects, and people who all share at least one thing in common: they live in the desert. The book provides images of people from different desert regions. Their looks and way of life still differ, even though they live in deserts. So, I think this book is of high quality in regards to the multicultural criteria. The information in this book is true because I recently have learned about deserts in my geology class. Also, the author provides a list of sources that he used to create this book. It even gives a brief description about him at the end of the book. The book is readable for students because of its simple set-up. It provides a title with a small paragraph, explaining different concepts about deserts. The book fits well under the scientific, non-fiction genre due to the information it covers about deserts.

Temperate Forests (True Books: Ecosystems) by Peter Benoit

The illustrations in this book expand on the temperate forests. There are images of types of temperate forests and what animals reside in them. The pictures are a helpful visual aid to the information conveyed by the text. So, the illustrations do enhance the text. Similar to his other books, he provides a page that states his resources so the author clearly has done research in order to write this book. I think this book would hold interest to children because the information discussed in the text is relevant to students. Temperate forests occur in mid-latitude regions where a fair amount of people live. Also, the animals in this book are easily recognizable due to the fact that they live close to us. Factual information about temperate forests is given in this book, which is why it fits into the non-fiction genre.

Wetlands (True Books: Ecosystems) by Peter Benoit

The illustrations show no bias and relate very well to the information addressed in this particular book. The pictures are of actual wetlands and the ecosystems within them. The author, Peter Benoit, gives a page with his resources so the readers know that he did research for this book. The pictures in this book show the regions where wetlands occur, animals that live in them, and plants that reside there. Overall, the illustrations match the text very well. The book would hold interest for children because of all the facts about wetlands. In addition, the visuals are a helpful aid for students to learn about wetlands. The book offers a substantial amount of detail about wetlands, which occur around most of the world. So, I think this book fits the genre of non-fiction effectively.

Living Color by Steve Jenkins

Living Color is multicultural because it shows animals from all different places of the world. It also shows how animals that may be the same color, they all have different special qualities that make them unique. The author has the authority to write on these animals because he does in depth research on all of the animals he includes in his books. He also includes information in the back of the book to further the reader's learning. The images the book has are kept realistic; there are no parts of the animal that are more pronounced than others. They are also illustrated with texture that helps grab the reader's attention. This book would be an okay read aloud because the text is interesting and the colors grab students' attention but it also has a lot of text that would be tiring to read, especially over and over.

Never Smile At A Monkey by Steve Jenkins

Never Smile At A Monkey is an informational text that warns of ways to behave when around certain animals. This book is considered to be multicultural because it includes animals from more than just one place in the world. For example, the author uses a platypus and a cassowary. The cassowary is only found in New Guinea and Australia and the platypus can be found in a number of environments. This book would be considered a good read aloud. This is a good read aloud because it has a repetitive nature (each page begins with NEVER...) it also gives information to keep students engaged but it is not overwhelmed with text. The author has the authority to write on these animals because he does in depth research on all of the animals he includes in his books. He also includes information in the back of the book to further the reader's learning.

What Do You Do With A Tail Like This? By Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

What Do You Do With A Tail Like This? Is an informational text that gives information about the different body parts on animals and how they help the animal survive. This book is considered to be multicultural because it talks about different animals around the world, and it does not just focus on one area that animals live in. For example, it talks about animals that live in the sea and animals that live in desert areas. The layout of this book enhances the information. It does this by showing pictures of the body parts only of the animals it will be discussing. For example, “What do you do with ears like these?” and the pictures are of hippo, rabbit, bat, and insect ears. This book would be considered a good read aloud. It is a good read aloud because it uses the same pattern. For example, “What do you do with ears like these? What do you do with eyes like these?” It also has textured pictures and it is not overwhelmed with text. The author has the authority to write on these animals because he does in depth research on all of the animals he includes in his books. He also includes information in the back of the book to further the reader’s learning.

Bugs Are Insects by Anne Rockwell and Steve Jenkins

Bugs Are Insects is an informational text that teaches about the difference between a bug and an insect and what different creatures fall into these categories. The author has authority to write about bugs and insects because they studied them and made sure they had reliable information. On the last pages, they include extra facts about insects and they cite their information from the Entomological Society of America. The illustrations in the

book enhance the text. The illustrations do this by being anatomically correct and proportionally correct. For example, when the text gives examples of insects or arachnids it discusses the number of legs these creatures have. In the illustrations, the insects and arachnids all are drawn with the correct number of legs. This book is considered a multicultural book because while it does only discuss insects, they are insects that live in different places of the world. I would consider this book to be a good read aloud. I feel this way because the book is written in easy to understand language, it has interactive pictures, and it is not over whelmed with text.

Animals In Flight by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

Animals in Flight is an informational text that discusses all different types of creatures that fly. This book is considered to be multicultural because it does not just talk about birds, it also discusses insects, mammals, and reptiles that fly as well. The author of this book has the authority to write about this information. This is shown by the back pages that have more in depth information than the story pages. This shows that the author has done research on the creatures they are writing about. Many of the illustrations enhance the text because the author uses dash facts to get most of the information into the book. The illustrations that go along with the dash facts help make the facts clearer by showing what they are discussing. For example, a dash fact about how the wingspan of one reptile is 40 ft. and an eagle has a span of 7 ft. The picture goes along with this fact of comparison between the two wingspans. Animals In Flight is a good read aloud. It is a good read aloud because it has pictures to help enhance the text, it also does not

overwhelm the reader with text. It does have several dash facts, but those can be read separate from the story.

Hello Baby! by Mem Fox and Steve Jenkins

Hello Baby! is an informational text that discusses infant animals and the things they do. This book is considered to be multicultural because it features baby animals from all over the world; for example the hippo and the gecko. The author and illustrator of this book have authority to write about this information, upon research they both have completed on different types of animals. The illustrations enhance the text by giving accurate depictions of the animals. This will help provide more information to a reader just by looking at the illustrations. Hello Baby! is an excellent choice for a read aloud. It is an excellent choice because the text is short, the pictures are lively, and there are rhyming words to catch children's attention.

Dogs and Cats by Steve Jenkins

Dogs and Cats is an informational text that gives facts about dogs and cats. This book is considered to be multicultural because it features dogs and cats from different places in the world. For example it discusses the South American bush dog and the Australian Jackal. The author has authority to write this material because they have done research on all different types of cats and dogs. The illustrations enhance the text by giving accurate depictions of the animals. This will help provide more information to a reader just by looking at the illustrations. This book would not be a good read aloud because it has a

large amount of text. This much text would prove to be exhausting for anyone attempting to read this book out loud. It is a much better fit for silent reading.

Part II and III: Reading Like a Writer

*See attached chart

Part IV: Establish Hypothetical Context and Plan Mini Lessons

Mini Lesson #1:

Mentor Text: My First Day by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Craft Name: Individuality

Teaching Point: Emphasis on important words in your story

Part of the Writing Process: Draft and/or Revision

Trait: Word choice

Connection to Common Core:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.5

With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at repetition in our writing with mentor texts. Repetition helps the reader by highlighting a key idea. Today writers, I'd like to show you another example of repetition in My First Day. We have already read this story, but I noticed some repetition in the book that we should look at.

(Teacher will show the word *my* is repeated and italicized for every different animals' first day discussed in the book.)

This repetition was done to show the individuality of animals and their experience of being born in this world. Even though the author repeated the word, *my*, he wanted to emphasize how different animals lives are from one another.

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

"Where I'm From" Poem:

Bodies of water, fresh air, and trees all put me at ease; that's where *I'm* from.

Attending mass on holy days, giving thanks for my life; that's where *I'm* from.

Grasping the hands of an older lady who's fallen to the ground; that's where *I'm* from.

Ready for whatever life throws at me, hoping for the best; that's where *I'm* from.

I repeated the last phrase in every line of my poem and italicized the word 'I'm' in order to emphasize that this is who I am. This helps me show the reader where *I* come from.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to work with repetition. Here are a few sentences; where do you think we could italicize to give it an emphasis?

(Teacher will write and show these sentences to students: "My mom and I went to the store to buy food. She bought yucky cabbage, but I wanted to get anything else.")

Take the next minute to think about a word you'd emphasize in these sentences. Then, turn to someone near you and share your word and why you chose to emphasize that word. (Give students thirty seconds to a minute to complete this task)

(Teacher will share a few words he/she heard students emphasize.)

'I heard _____ say he/she emphasized _____ because _____.'

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice emphasizing your words with italics was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, are trying to get a point across to the reader. There is no limit on what the reason is, but the italics in your story should convey a point to your reader. You can continue to use this craft in any piece of writing you complete because repeating and emphasizing particular words sends a special message to the reader.

SHARE students' pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they've tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to help readers understand our writing by using italics to emphasize certain words.

Mini Lesson #2:

Mentor Text: Animals in Flight by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Craft Name: Dash Facts

Teaching Point: Quick ways to integrate more information in the text

Part of the Writing Process: Draft

Trait: Ideas/Content and Organization

Connection to Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at how to fit more facts into our informational texts. These facts give the readers more knowledge about the current topic they're reading about. Today writers, I'd like to show you an example of giving more information about a topic while using minimal space on a page. We have already read this story, but I noticed something in the book that we should look at.

(Teacher will open the book, Animals in Flight, and show students a specific page. For example, page five in the text displays a pterodactyl. Point out to the students that there is only one line of text that belongs to the story. Then show the additional small paragraphs and explain to the students that these are called 'dash facts'.)

These 'dash facts' are put in the text to give more information about what's being addressed on the page.

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

(Their example should include a picture, a sentence that could pertain to a story, and then one to three dash facts about the picture. The dash facts need to be laid out sporadically on the page.)

As you see here, I have a picture of a butterfly. 'Some insects have wings' is the sentence that connects to the entire story. My dash facts for the butterfly are butterflies range in size from one-eighth inch to almost twelve inches, they can see red, green, and yellow, and they cannot fly if their body temperature is less than eighty-six degrees Fahrenheit. Notice how each of my facts is spread out around the page and they all pertain to the picture on the page.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to practice creating dash facts. On your own, think of a topic you know a lot about. Possible topics are video games, best friend, dogs, etc. Take a minute and think of facts about your topic. Then, share your dash facts with a classmate sitting close by.

(Give students thirty seconds to a minute to complete this task)

(Teacher will share a few dash facts he/she heard students say.)

'I heard _____ give a dash fact _____ about _____.'

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice creating dash facts was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, are trying to include more facts in your informational writing.

SHARE students' pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they've tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to incorporate more facts into our informational writing by using dash facts.

Mini Lesson #3:

Mentor Text: Bones by Steve Jenkins

Craft Name: Labels

Teaching Point: Labeling pictures in informational text

Part of the Writing Process: Draft

Trait: Organization

Connection to Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.2

Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at labeling pictures in books. Labeling helps identify what's being shown in a picture. Today writers, I'd like to show you an example of labeling pictures in a text. We have already read this story, but I noticed something in the book that we should look at.

(Teacher will open the book, Bones, and show students how the author labels his pictures by identifying the bones shown.)

These labels are put in the text to help explain what the pictures are showing.

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

(Teacher shows a small section of text with a picture of which the picture is labeled.)

For example, here is a haiku about butterflies.

Small and flying bug
Graceful air lifts it higher
Searching through the world



Monarch Butterfly

As you see here, I wrote a poem about a butterfly that includes a picture. Then I labeled this picture to tell the readers what is in the picture.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to practice labeling a picture.

(Teacher will hand a small picture of something to each student.)

On your own, look at your picture and write a label on the backside of the picture. Then, share your labeled picture with a neighbor.

(Give students thirty seconds to a minute to complete this task.)

(Teacher will share a few labeled pictures that the students made.)

' _____ has a picture of _____ and he/she labeled it _____.'

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice writing labels was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, have included pictures in your work.

SHARE students' pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they've tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to label pictures in our writing.

Mini Lesson #4:

Mentor Text: Hello Baby! by Steve Jenkins & Mem Fox

Craft Name: Rhyming Words

Teaching Point: Using rhyming words to enhance the text

Part of the Writing Process: Draft and/or Revision

Trait: Word Choice

Connection to Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.5

With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at rhyming in our writing with mentor texts. Rhyming engages the reader and makes the text more exciting to read. Today writers, I'd like to show you another example of repetition in Hello Baby!. We have already read this story, but I noticed some rhyming in the book that we should look at.

(Teacher will show that the last word on one page rhymes with the last word on the following page.)

Rhyming was done to make the text more exciting.

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

(Teacher will write four lines with the first two rhyming with each other and the last two rhyming with each other.)

For example,

'One day I went to the store,
And to be honest with you, it was really quite a bore.
They were all out of bread.
So I stopped and thought with my head.'

As you can see, I rhymed the last words of sentences one and two and then I rhymed the last words of sentences three and four.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to work with rhyming. With a partner, create two sentences that have the last words rhyming just like I did.

(Give students a minute to complete this task)

(Teacher will share a few students' work.)

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice rhyming your words was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, are trying engage your audience.

SHARE students' pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they've tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to capture our readers by rhyming.

Mini Lesson #5:

Mentor Text: How to Clean a Hippopotamus by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Craft Name: Bolding

Teaching Point: Bolding words highlight important topics in a text

Part of the Writing Process: Draft and/or Revision

Trait: Word Choice

Connection to Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.5

With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at bolding words in our writing. Bolding words show the reader the important topic to be discussed. Today writers, I'd like to show you another example of bolding text in How to Clean a Hippopotamus. We have already read this story, but I noticed some bolded words in the book that we should look at.

(Teacher will show bolded words on various pages within the text.)

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

(Teacher will create a sentence about a particular topic and bold the topic within the sentence.)

For example,

‘The **Monarch Butterfly** is a species that is becoming endangered.’

As you can see, I bolded the term, Monarch Butterfly, to show the reader the main topic that is being addressed in the passage.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to work with bolding words. With a partner, look at the passage I’ve given you and underline what you think the main topic of the passage is.

(Give students a minute to complete this task)

(Teacher will share a few students’ work.)

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice bolding words was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, are trying to show the reader the main topic being discussed within your writing.

SHARE students’ pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they’ve tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to highlight words within our writing.

Mini Lesson #6:

Mentor Text: What Do You Do With a Tail Like This? by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page

Craft Name: Anatomy Organize

Teaching Point: A new way to organize information in a text

Part of the Writing Process: Draft

Trait: Organization

Connection to Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.7

Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at ways to organize information in our writing. The way we organize our information keeps the reader interested. In addition, it helps them locate information within the book. Today writers, I'd like to show you another example of organizing information in What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?. We have already read this story, but I noticed the way the author organized the book that we should look at.

(Teacher will show certain pages categorize information by body parts.)

As you can see, the first page shows pictures of noses from various animals. Then the next page shows how those animals use their nose.

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

I wanted to write about the five senses. So, on each page, I drew a body part that uses one of the five senses.

For example,

I have a picture of a pair of eyes on one page and on the next page I talked about our sense of sight.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to work with organizing information by body parts. With a partner, think of a way to categorize information by body part, similar to what I did with the five senses.

(Give students a minute to complete this task)

(Teacher will share a few students' work.)

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice organizing information was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, are trying to organize information in an interesting and logical way.

SHARE students' pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they've tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to organize information in our writing.

Mini Lesson #7:

Mentor Text: Deserts by Peter Benoit

Craft Name: Title Phrase/Question

Teaching Point: Creating a summarizing sentence about your writing

Part of the Writing Process: Draft and/or Revision

Trait: Organization

Connection to Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at ways summarize the information in our writing. This helps guide the reader in order to understand the topic being addressed. Today writers, I'd like to show you another example of summarizing information as shown in Deserts. We have already read this story, but I noticed the way the author started each passage with a summarizing phrase that we should look at.

(Teacher will show the topic phrases throughout the text.)

As you can see on page twenty-one, the author begins the explanation of desertification by titling the section, "Man-made Deserts".

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

Butterflies and Their Eyes

Adult butterflies are highly visual animals, relying on their keen eyesight to locate and identify appropriate mates by looking at and comparing their wing colors and patterns.

As you can see, the title summarizes the content of the passage.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to work with summarizing a passage into a topic phrase. With a partner, think of a title phrase that summarizes your passage.

(Give students a minute to complete this task)

(Teacher will share a few students' work.)

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice creating a title phrase was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, are trying to highlight the importance of your writing.

SHARE students' pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they've tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to title our writing.

Mini Lesson #8:

Mentor Text: Living Color by Steve Jenkins

Craft Name: Color Organizer

Teaching Point: Organizing your information by color

Part of the Writing Process: Draft and/or Revision

Trait: Organization

Connection to Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.7

Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

CONNECT to the relevance of this lesson to the children – to their writing and what has already been discussed?

Recently, we've been looking at ways organize the information in our writing. This keeps the reader engaged and interested in the text. It also helps them locate specific information. Today writers, I'd like to show you another example of organizing information as shown in Living Color. We have already read this story, but I noticed the way the author organized his information by color. So, let's take a look!

(Teacher will show the different colored sections of the book.)

As you can see, the author has broken up his information by color. Each section shows animals of the same color.

TEACH a demonstration of the strategy, craft or procedure.

Here's how I used this in my own writing yesterday. Let me show you...

I chose to write about different environments around the globe; I organized them by color.

For example,

The ocean, I decided to associate the color blue. For the rainforest, I used green. For the desert, I used the color brown. For volcanoes, I used the color red.

As you can see, a topic can be categorized by various colors.

ENGAGE the students with an opportunity to try it out and for the teacher to check their understanding.

Now it is your turn to have a chance to work with organizing information by color. With a partner, think of a topic that could be organized by color.

(Give students a minute to complete this task)

(Teacher will share a few students' work.)

LINK to how students will use what you just taught them later in the day, week, or in life.

I hope the time you had to practice organizing information by using color was helpful. This craft is useful when you, as the writer, are trying to organize your work in an interesting way.

SHARE students' pieces at the end of the writing time to see what they've tried. Recap what was learned today.

Today when you are writing, try this craft and share your attempt with someone else. We just learned a new way to organize our writing.

Hypothetical Context:

Our study of mentor texts would best fit a second grade class. At the beginning of the year, we would begin with a unit geared toward helping students make their writing more engaging to a reader. For this unit, we would use mini lessons one and four that we've created. We chose to start with these lessons because general writing techniques are addressed in both lessons. This will help remind students of previous knowledge and help them grow as writers. Following this unit, we would begin another unit on non-fiction writing. For this unit, we would use the rest of our mini lessons. The various mini lessons focus on different crafts specifically for non-fiction writing. We decided to pursue a unit on non-fictional writing in order to help broaden the knowledge of our young writers. The time it would take for the completion of both units would be about half a school year.

As far as executing our mini lessons, we would have the classroom divided into four corners. The first corner would be designated for instructing our mini lessons. The second corner would hold various types of mentor texts that relate to our unit of study. The third corner would be an environment for student collaboration in writing. The last corner would be for conferences between the teacher and the student. By designing a four corner writing environment, a consistent writing practice would be established. In addition, this set-up would help the teacher formatively assess students in their process of writing.

Part V: Reflection Notes

When we started this project, we didn't realize that mentor texts could be used as a tool for writing. But, throughout the process of locating and examining mentor texts, we discovered the many ways that mentor texts could unleash a number of ideas for writing. By completing this project, we've learned how to successfully structure a writing workshop of which we'll use in our near future. Personally, we've both gained the skill of reading like a writer. Another realization we came across was how much time and effort needs to be spent on creating viable mini lessons and units of study.

The most critical question that we feel was answered by completing this project was how to best implement a writing workshop environment within a classroom. We were both unaware of the full process of teaching writing. This project brought to light the essential guidelines we need to implement a writing workshop in the future. By practicing the skill of reading like a writer, we both uncovered the variety of crafts writers use in their work. We've found that the connection between reading and writing is profound. Both reading and writing intertwine tightly. The practice of reading like a writer helps strengthen writing abilities. Also, writing like a reader helps strengthen reading abilities. Throughout the course of this project, we have gained both the knowledge and skill set to create and implement a healthy reading and writing environment in our future classrooms.