Micro-Teaching Reflection Paper

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Individual Reflection

 On November 15, 2018 as a group of three, Lacey, Kayla and I presented the modelled writing approach to teach the concept of writing procedural texts to our colleagues. The procedure we chose to demonstrate was making playdough and we taught in a way that would be appropriate for a grade three classroom. We began by first explaining the features of a procedural text to ensure the audience understood what type of writing style we would be demonstrating and what it is used for. Because our procedure of making playdough is a type of recipe, students can use their prior knowledge about recipes to begin to understand what this specific type of procedure may look like and how it is used. As we have learned previously in class from Professor McNeil, using the Language Experience Approach is a fantastic way to ensure students are learning literacy in a meaningful way. Applying all the knowledge we have gained this semester, we decided to choose a procedure such as making playdough that students could experience together and be able to reflect on and repeat when expected to create or follow written procedural texts in the future. By using the information from the Literacy textbook, in our presentation we identified that there are four important features of a procedure, they are:

1. Tells the reader how to do something such as carry out instructions or give directions

2. Includes the goal of the procedure

3. Indicates the materials/equipment needed to carry out the goal

4. Provides a clear sequence of steps to achieve the goal (Winch, 2014, pg. 282).

The next step in our presentation was to explain the importance of language in procedural texts. As recommended by the *Literacy* textbook, we felt it was important to explain how procedures are written in the imperative mood; through commands such as “fill” or “measure” (Winch, 2014, pg. 282). Continuing to follow the *Literacy* textbook, we also noted that procedures need to be written in the present tense and using vocabulary that is subject-specific (Winch, 2014, pg. 282). So for example, because we were writing a recipe for playdough, it was important to use words such as “roll” and “mix”. The Educational Theory of how children learn to read that we chose to focus on is the semantic aspects of language. This means we were focusing on teaching children the meaning of words and using vocabulary that is relevant to the activity we were doing. To demonstrate this we had a list of vocabulary words written on a large piece of paper and hanging up beside us as we were presenting. We were able to identify these words and point to them on the vocabulary list as they came up throughout the playdough making procedure. Words that were maybe new to students such as “cream of tarter” were explained so students had a better understanding of the ingredients needed and what they were used for. The vocabulary list was very useful to have and helped indicate what words we wanted students to learn and remember. Having a vocabulary list visible in the classroom even after an activity is over is important because it allows students to refer back to the list and recall what they learned and increases their overall oral and written vocabulary that they can use and be familiar with. After we finished going through our PowerPoint with all our important background information we wanted students to know, we then passed out three different things to our audience:

* Recipe cards with the procedure of making playdough on them
* Examples of different recipe books and playdough/craft books
* A blank example of how to properly write a procedural text

 I think that by introducing the key features of procedural texts and explaining our main focuses for the lesson we really set up the presentation of doing modelled writing of a procedural text in a logical way. We were able to transition in a more natural way that would maintain the interest of the audience and ensure they have a clear understanding of what was going on and what to expect throughout the lesson. Providing examples of procedural texts similar to the one we would be demonstrating allows students to become more familiar with the text type and begin to gain a better insight of how they could create their own procedural text in the future on the blank version we handed out. It is very important and beneficial for students to be immersed in different text types and have many well written examples that they can use as guidelines for their own writing.

Initially, our group had planned for Kayla and I to share the responsibility of modelling writing and verbalizing what we were thinking as we were writing out the title, aim and ingredients for the procedure. We assumed it would be more efficient for one of us to focus on talking as the other one wrote and then switch roles. However, thankfully Professor McNeil corrected this incorrect method of presenting very quickly because it was not properly demonstrating modelled writing. We were able to adjust accordingly and continue on without any real issues for the remainder of our lesson. Modelled writing is believed to be an incredibly useful tool when teaching young and inexperienced writers how to create different text types. As explained by Sharan Gibson, “modeled writing will help you to provide authentic explanations for your students, demonstrating how writers actually go about constructing various kinds of texts” (2018). We did this by actually presenting the entire process of writing a procedural text. We showed each step which included the very beginning of writing the title to the end of the procedure of re-reading our written instructions to make revisions and make sure it is accurate. Gibson also notes that the reason modelled writing is so effective is because “teachers verbalize the internal dialog they use as they write a particular type of text, explicitly demonstrating metacognitive processes” and this encourages students’ own process of learning and writing as writing is a “complex cognitive activity” (2018). If we had continued doing our initial presentation plan, we would not have met this criteria of modelled writing because it is the internal dialog of the writer and having a separate writer and speaker does not accurately demonstrate this process. I have learned that as a group we should have re-examined what exactly modelled writing is to ensure we were properly planning a presentation that would be correctly demonstrate what the goal of the assignment is. Prior to presenting, our group should have explained our presentation plans to Professor McNeil to make sure we were meeting all the assignment requirements. I learned that if I am unsure about what the expectations are, I should ask the professor to clarify or further investigate the concepts being taught.

One thing I think our group did very well with is demonstrating the process of revising and editing our writing. When Professor McNeil originally explained this assignment to the class she emphasized the significance of verbalizing and demonstrating how to edit and revise work aloud using different revision techniques. Using this information, we planned specific words to spell incorrectly or to leave out in the sentence we were writing so that we were able to give students a visual of what it looks like to go back and revise what we have written in order to make it correct and ready to be shared with others. We modelled certain skills in writing such as how to strike out an incorrect word and then write the correct word above the strike out and how to insert a missing word using the “carrot” method. We made sure that we demonstrated these types of revising methods because it is very important to model each step in the writing process for students.

This modelled writing assignment was very beneficial for me to learn and practice the modelled writing approach in front of my fellow colleagues where I needed to work with my group to teach the process of writing a procedural text. An assignment like this helps develop a future educator in many ways. This assignment encourages future educators to improve our knowledge about different text types and become confident with the process of writing them. This assignment also teaches us to learn a type of teaching method that we may be unfamiliar with; the modelled writing approach. This modelled writing method is appropriate to be used in all grade levels and as a way to teach a variety of different text types. As future teachers it is helpful to do group assignments and presentations. It is valuable for me to work in groups with new people because it helps me gain more knowledge about a topic from my colleagues and group work also teaches me how to work and collaborate with all types of people. These three elements; learning different text types, learning different teaching methods, and working with different people are all things that will help me progress as a future educator and can be applied throughout my future career. This experience will be applicable in future classes and lessons I teach; because of this assignment I will have the knowledge and confidence to properly execute the modelled writing approach when teaching literacy.

Works Cited

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