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Spring 2020

Beyond the Plot: Learning Through Fiction

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Kluthe, Anne, "Beyond the Plot: Learning Through Fiction" (2020). *Honors Expanded Learning Clubs*. 51.
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NEBRASKA HONORS PROGRAM
CLC EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY CLUBS
INFORMATION SHEET

Name of Club: Reading Club (Beyond the Plot: Learning Through Fiction)

Age/Grade Level: Grades 3-5

Number of Attendees: (ideal number) 4-7

Goal of the Club: (learning objectives/outcomes)

Encourage outside learning based on what is in the book; introduce the concept of author's intent.

Resources: (Information for club provided by)

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi by Rudyard Kipling, *Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr, *Counting by 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan, *The Name of This Book is Secret* by Pseudonymous Bosch

Content Areas: (check all that apply)

- Arts (Visual, Music, Theater & Performance)
- Literacy
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
- Social Studies
- Wellness (Physical Education, Health, Nutrition & Character Education)

Outputs or final products: (Does the club have a final product/project to showcase to community?)

None.

Introducing your Club/Activities:

At the start of each meeting, we have a discussion where we delve deeper into topics briefly covered in the book that are either confusing or are topics students simply want to learn more about. The books are around the 3rd to 5th grade reading level. Later on, the topic of conversation will slowly start to cover literary devices like foreshadowing and author's voice so students can get used to looking for those devices without the stress of being graded on it.

General Directions:

Understand where in each student's reading journey is and give them the resources you can in order to help them along their path. If students do not want to discuss the book, anticipate what topics 3rd-5th graders would not know about and prepare lessons around those topics. However, it important to encourage discussions, since they will help illuminate which topics to cover.

Tips/Tricks:

Give students some control by allowing them to in part decide how fast the book will be read and decide which topics will be covered. It is your job to give structure and make sure the speed is not unreasonable (either too fast or too slow) and to deconstruct complex topics into something everyone can understand. If you are having a hard time getting students to interact in discussions, try saying “ask me two questions”.

LESSON PLAN WORKSHEET

(copy table as needed)

Lesson Activity First Week-- Introductions

Name:

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of several books (so they can be voted on)

Directions:

Introduce yourself, have everyone else introduce themselves. Vote on which book to read first, discuss what is a reasonable amount read each week. Finally, some students chose to start reading to themselves while I read out loud to the student(s) who wanted to read along with me.

Conclusion of the activity:

While several students were very enthusiastic about reading, I suspect one or more may not be reading outside of the club. To combat this, I will summarize the previous chapters while we have our discussion at the beginning of the next club, so at least everyone is somewhat on the same page. And if there is time after the discussion and lesson that day, we will continue reading out loud until the club is over.

Parts of activity that worked:

The students seemed to enjoy having some control on what to read first.

Parts of activity that did not work:

No noticeable problems so far.

Lesson Activity Chapters 1-5 of Extra Credit by Andrew Clements

Name:

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about the previous chapters. I did a small but informative lecture with a PowerPoint about some topics that were briefly discussed in the book that didn't go into enough detail and so can be confusing if that is your first time hearing about it. In this case, I talked about Afghanistan (we were discussing it last week and none of the students knew that it was a country, much less where it was or why they should know about it) and how it is geographically and culturally different from the U.S., specifically Illinois, where the other half the book takes place. After that, I will see if there was anything I missed that confused anyone (which depending on what it is, I could answer right away or bring more information the next week). Finally, we started reading the next week's chapters until class ends.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students had a stronger grasp on where Afghanistan is and why that is significant in our novel.

Parts of activity that worked:

So far, students have been engaged with my reading and mini-lecture.

Parts of activity that did not work:

I did the slideshow on my computer. This is fine for a small group, but if we get much bigger, I'll have to ask if I can use the Smart Board and figure out how to use that.

Lesson Activity *Extra Credit, Week 2*

Name:

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about the previous chapters. I did a small but informative lecture on the Afghan War (the “whens” and “whys” from both an American and Afghan perspective) and how it leads to the current battles today. After that, we will start reading the next week’s chapters until class ends. Then I saw if they have any questions so I can get a topic for next week.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students will have a stronger grasp on the war in Afghanistan.

Parts of activity that worked:

I had the students look at the copyright page in order to deduce when the book took place. Even though we don’t know the exact year, we know it doesn’t take place after 2009, since that was when the book was published, and based on the fact Abby (the American girl) can watch the news and hear about people fighting in Afghanistan (no mention of that includes American troops or not), it probably took place after 2001.

Parts of activity that did not work:

Students didn’t particularly care about this topic, especially since there were so many factions, but honestly, I still think it was important to learn about.

Lesson Activity *Extra Credit, Week 3 (ended on page 100)*

Name:

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about the previous chapters. did a small but informative lecture (with a PowerPoint on my computer) about different types of headscarves and some of the many reasons women may or may not wear them. After that, we read the next week's chapters until class ends. Then I saw if they had any questions so I can get a topic for next week.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students will know they different types of (Muslim) headscarves, and why some women wear them (hint: variety of political, religious, and cultural reasons). In the case of Sadeed's family and community, since the Taliban were around, it can be assumed the reason his sister, mother, and neighbors wore headscarves was mostly political.

Parts of activity that worked:

Strong positive response to the two memes I used in my presentation.

Parts of activity that did not work:

I used a meme (actually two, but they were in the same slide) in the presentation, and while it was a big hit and they enjoyed it, it took a couple of minutes after that to calm them down enough to move on to the next slide.

Lesson Activity *Extra Credit*: Pages 100-118

Name:

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about the previous chapters. I did a small but informative lecture (with a PowerPoint on my computer) about the students' topic of choice. In this case, I talked about erosion. After that, we will start reading the next week's chapters until class ends. Then I saw if they had any questions so I can get a topic for next week.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students will have a better grasp on the different types of erosion.

Parts of activity that worked:

I used one eraser rubbing off onto another to simulate how slow-moving glaciers picked up and carried earth particles, shaping the landscape. The students liked this way of showing how erosion works and I think it will be memorable for them if they study erosion later.

Parts of activity that did not work:

The slideshow was very short since I put for types of erosion on one slide. The students wished I had made separate slides for each there were in more depth. In addition, they had decided my reading rate is "too slow" and so we decided to try reading in silence next time instead of having me read aloud.

Lesson Activity Name: *Extra Credit* Conclusion and the Beginning of A New Book

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Extra Credit* by Andrew Clements

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about *Extra Credit*. After that, we will decide which book we want to start next since we have all the books we could choose from. After that, we will start reading the next week's chapters (this time in silence) until class ends. Then I will see if they have any questions so I can get a topic for next week.

Conclusion of the activity:

We will see just how effective reading on our own will be, especially considering everyone's different reading rates.

Parts of activity that worked:

N/A

Parts of activity that did not work:

I never actually got to this lesson plan. It was at this point in the semester that the school closed because of COVID19, so lesson templates will be pretty cookie-cutter from this point forward. A lot of my plans directly revolve around how the students react, so it is a standard, yet ever changing, club that will have a standard (but somewhat vague) lesson plan.

Lesson Activity Name: *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* (by Eleanor Coerr) Introduction

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. After that, I do a small presentation on Japanese honorifics (-san, -chan, etc.). After that, we will start reading the next week's chapters until class ends. Then I will see if they have any questions so I can get a topic for next week.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students will have a better understanding of Japanese honorifics.

Parts of activity that worked:

N/A

Parts of activity that did not work:

N/A

Lesson Activity Name: *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*: Radiation Poisoning

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. After that, I do a small presentation on the effects of radiation poisoning on the human body. After that, we will start reading the next week's chapters until class ends. Then I will see if they have any questions so I can get a topic for next week.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students will have a better understanding of the horrors of the dropping of the atom bombs.

Parts of activity that worked:

N/A

Parts of activity that did not work:

N/A

Lesson Activity Name: *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* (by Eleanor Coerr) Conclusion

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr

Directions:

Talk about our day, and then transition into what we thought about *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. Then we will learn how to make paper cranes for the rest of the time. At the end of class, the new book will be handed out.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students will have a break from my slideshows and learn just how much effort it took for Sadako to make all those cranes.

Parts of activity that worked:

N/A

Parts of activity that did not work:

N/A

Lesson Activity Name: *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* (Full Book)

Length of Activity: 1 hour

Supplies: 10 copies of *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* by Rudyard Kipling

Directions:

Since *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* is so short, everyone should have read it over the course of the past week. We will again look at the copywrite to figure out when the story takes place, and then we will discuss why there were Englanders in India at that time. After that, we will discuss what we thought of the book and pick a new book to read.

Conclusion of the activity:

Students should become more comfortable searching for context clues within the book, and they should know why the English were in India.

Parts of activity that worked:

N/A

Parts of activity that did not work:

N/A
