

Aussie Professional Development

Assessment and Conferring within the Balanced Literacy Block

Presenter - Chris Lowry

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Attached is a brief outline of the workshop conducted on June 29, 2010. This is simply an attempt to provide participants with additional, informal notes gathered throughout the workshop session. Included PowerPoint slides are copyrighted by Aussie.

Notes compiled by J. McCoid, PGM Math Coach

Opening – Guided Reading Millionaire game

Discussion Activity

Assessments

- Brainstorm - What assessments are we required to do?

Running records, Learnia, spelling inventory, writing samples, benchmark assessments, reading logs, book reports, rubrics, conferring, reading journals, responding to text, informal assessments – conferring, small groups, kid watching, anecdotal notes, etc.

- Which are the best at informing our instruction?

- Discuss and compare with a partner

- List the most valuable.

Shared by presenter -

Conferencing folder –samples were shared from Jersey City

Recommended texts - Assessing Writers, How's it Going? – Carl Anderson

What are running records?

- A running record allows you to assess a student's reading performance as she/he reads from a benchmark book. Benchmark books are books selected for running record assessment purposes.
- A running record form, with text from the book printed on the form, accompanies each of the benchmark books. Only the first 100 -150 words of the longer benchmark books are used for the upper level running records.

- A blank running record form is supplied for teachers who wish to perform running records on books other than the benchmark books or for additional text from the upper level benchmark books.

Processing strategies –

- Attending and searching
- Anticipating
- Monitoring
- Checking (cross checking)
- Confirming
- Self correcting

M = Meaning S = Structure V = Visual

All assist in the meaning making process and when used effectively are interwoven.

What are strategies?

Networks of actions, which efficient readers “call up” automatically.

Early Reading Strategies include:

- Attend
- Search
- Predict
- Check
- Reread
- Self-correct

Caution - Students may have picked up enough of the structure of the language to assign meaning. Teacher may think the child comprehends, but they really don't.

Discussed "What kind of cue is being used?"

Example – She went to the stream.

The word sea was substituted for the word stream. This student has meaning cues. The meaning of sea makes sense in the sentence.

Questions to ask when a child makes an error:

Does it make sense? Does it look right? M

Is it structurally correct? S

It didn't look right? (When student is trying to self -correct) V

Running records will only be a useful source for goal setting if:

- They have sufficient errors to show how the students tackle challenging text - 90-95% accuracy
- The running record shows what the child did
- The student's errors and self-corrections are analyzed.

Activity –

Edwin and Hazel running record analysis discussion

Both read at the same level with the same accuracy level but they have very different learning needs.

Hazel can ... and need to...

Edwin can... and needs to ...

Activity – Analyze running record from Rory in small groups.

Review subsequent analysis as a group.

Running record demo

Presenter read passage (trains), participants record errors, notes, etc.

Results were discussed

Read next sample with a partner – one reads, other records errors/analyzes results

What are Rubrics?

- Rubrics are performance-based assessments that evaluate student performance on any given task or set of tasks that ultimately leads to a final product, or learning outcome. Rubrics use specific criteria as a basis for evaluating or

assessing student performances as indicated in narrative descriptions that are separated into levels of possible performance related to a given task.

- Rating scales can be either **holistic** or **analytical**. Holistic scales offer several dimensions together while analytical scales offer a separate scale for various dimensions.

Aim for three running records a day.

Reading conference can consist of a short conversation – not an interrogation! ☺

Spot conference on Fridays – check reading logs, make any notes, adjustments

An even numbered rubric prevents you from going with the middle score if you are unsure. Be sure to take students through the rubric so that they are familiar with it and know what it means.

These are the sorts of things you need to do to get a perfect score using the rubric.

The requirements should be presented in child friendly language.

Activity –

Birthday party rubric

Using the rubric, score the last party you attended.

Rubric Creation

- Look at the birthday party rubric example in your packet
- In groups of four create your own fun rubric (last page in packet)
- Student Friendly checklist sample

Next, select an event – trip into NYC, holiday at your house, etc.

Create a rubric for this activity – what would be a 4? A 1? What are the criteria for your rubric?

Share out

Anchor Texts

- Here are some favorite anchor texts
- List favorite read-alouds that could be used as anchor texts to accentuate your mini lessons
- What do we already know about conferring? What questions do you have?

Why confer?

- What do we already know about conferring?
Conferring can be meeting/speaking with a student to discuss work, a conversation between two readers and writers, about thinking, wonderings; an opportunity to praise/assist a student in their work. Provides students with a focus. Helps teacher to plan lessons, address specific areas.

Activity:

- In pairs write down what you know about conferring
- Share with another pair
- Report out to group

Appreciating the Student

Clip 1 - Fletcher/Portalupi DVD excerpt and discussion

Let's think about how you have changed as a reader this year. How does knowing or changing the author's point of view change what you're reading? Have you thought of the author's bias as you read?

When you are conferencing, do you feel the student is leveling with you? Do students feel comfortable sharing thoughts with you? Will your body language/comments shut the student down?

Clip 2 -Donald Graves – Inside Writing DVD excerpt

- Sue Ann's Fishbowl - Techniques and expectations for peer conferencing are modeled.
- Students are naturally engaged in teacher's life.
- Fishbowl - Class watches as teacher and student confer
- I want you to pay attention to the language we use when we are conferring with each other – notice the things we say and don't say –
- Seeing what is looks like and sounds like is helpful. The teacher shares HER work aloud with the student (As class watches and listens). Does my story make sense? Role of peer is to listen, not to fix the writing.
- Teacher is looked at as a fellow writer, gaining credibility as a writer with students. When the teacher goes first, she is acting like a writer, not one with the answers. Notes aloud that she might try a new way to start her story.
- Notices the good points first when commenting on student work.
- Asks class to notice "we are not crying, not angry with each other"
- Writers must maintain control of their own writing. Not the teacher or another writer.
- At end of conferencing, leave time for a whole class debrief. Clarify teaching point.

Conferencing folder sample –

- Refer to conferencing questions found in hand out.
- Boxes with student names/dates of conferences at a glance.
- One page for each student, double sided. (Gives you 12 conferences a year)
- On back page - Traits of Writing on one side, Process of Writing on the other for teacher reference.

Record - What did you notice, teaching point – provide teaching point for student on sticky label. Relay expectations - "I expect to see you working on this point from here on." Great resource for assessment/conferences with parents.

Students need to be expected to have accountability. If it was taught, students need to apply it!

Reading Conference folder is set up same way –

Reading conference components include one sheet of possible questions, conference notes sheet – one per student

Effects on student achievement

**In your opinion, number each item in order of importance
on student achievement**

Class size

Gender

Cultural background of student

Teacher salary

Student's attitude to learning

Curriculum

Attendance

Teacher quality and effectiveness

Classroom environment

General academic aptitude

Teacher's attitude to learning

Socio-economic background

Best answer for number 1 factor is quality teaching

Reflection on Learning

- List five adaptations you are going to make to your classroom assessment following this professional development!