

MAISA and the REMC Association of Michigan Best Practices in Technology Integration Plan

Title: Classroom Newspaper

Subject(s): Language Arts

Intended Grade Level(s): First

Description:

The purpose of this ongoing unit is to have students learn about sentence writing. Students will learn what a complete sentence is and the proper punctuation needed for sentences. Another purpose is to teach students to speak in front of an audience. Students are taught to speak loudly, clearly and slowly to be understood. A third purpose of this unit is to keep parents informed as to what is happening in the classroom from week to week. The last purpose is for students and parents to see progress in sentence writing throughout the school year and for students to see their sentences in print for all to read.

Curriculum Benchmarks:

1. [MI.ELA.1.EE.1](#). Use reading for multiple purposes such as enjoyment, gathering information and learning new procedures.
2. [MI.ELA.1.EE.2](#). Read with developing fluency a variety of texts, such as stories, poems, messages, menus and directions.
3. [MI.ELA.1.EE.5](#). Respond to the ideas and feelings generated by text and share with peers.
4. [MI.ELA.2.EE.1](#). Write with developing fluency for multiple purposes to produce a variety of texts, such as stories, journals, learning logs, directions and letters.
5. [MI.ELA.2.EE.3](#). Begin to plan and draft texts and revise and edit in response to the feelings and ideas expressed by others.

6. [MI.ELA.2.EE.4](#). Begin to edit text and discuss language conventions using appropriate terms. Examples include action words, naming words, capital letters and periods.
7. [MI.ELA.3.EE.3](#). Read and write with developing fluency, speak confidently, listen and interact appropriately in situations, view knowledgeably and represent creatively. Examples include sharing in groups, using an author's/reader's chair and working in cooperative groups.
8. [MI.ELA.3.EE.4](#). Describe and use effective listening and speaking behaviors that enhance verbal communication and facilitate the construction of meaning. Examples include use of gestures and appropriate group behavior.
9. [MI.ELA.3.EE.7](#). Recognize that creators of texts make choices when constructing text to convey meaning, express feelings and influence an audience. Examples include word selection, sentence length and use of illustrations.
10. [MI.ELA.6.EE.2](#). Experiment with the various voices they use when they speak and write for different purposes and audiences.
11. [MI.ELA.7.EE.4](#). Begin to develop and use strategies for planning, drafting, revising and editing a variety of text forms.
12. [MI.ELA.8.EE.1](#). Identify and use writing mechanics that enhance and clarify understanding. Examples include use of punctuation, and conventional spelling as well as approximations of conventional spelling.
13. [MI.ELA.10.EE.1](#). Make connections between key ideas in literature and other texts and their own lives.
14. [MI.ELA.12.EE.4](#). Create a collection of personal work selected according to both individual and shared criteria, reflecting on the merit of each selection.

Materials/Hardware/Software:

For the finished product to be successful the following items are necessary:

- parent volunteers

- cross-age tutors
- primary dictionaries from Modern Learning Press
- writing paper
- computers
- printers
- copy machine with shrinking capability
- 2-11x14 sheets of paper, folded in half

Activities/Procedures:

1. Every day for four days the students write and illustrate journal pages. This is done on a single sheet of paper. Cross-age tutors are used to assist the students in proper sentence writing and punctuation. Primary dictionaries are used for the students to spell words correctly.
2. Students can be directed by the teacher as to what to write about or it may be called "Anything" day, where students may write about anything they wish.
3. Teacher directed writing would be connecting the journal page writing to a story that was read during Reading instruction. Examples would be "George Shrinks". The students would write about what it would be like if they shrunk to his size. On the 100th Day of School the students would write about what they have learned so far in class. For Math-money, the students would write about what they would do with a certain amount of money.
4. Students then read their sentences to the cross-age tutors and illustrate the sentences.
5. When the sentence writing and illustrations are complete, the students date stamp their paper and come over to a designated area and sit in an open circle.
6. Each child reads his/her sentences and shows the rest of the students the illustration that goes with the page. This is called "Circle Time". The pages are kept by the students in a folder.
7. On the fifth day, the students choose one of the four journal pages to be put in the weekly newspaper. This is called a "Sloppy Copy".
8. The teacher collects and keeps all of the journal pages. The sloppy copy is kept by the student to be refined and rewritten.
9. The cross-age tutors are used to help the students refine the sloppy copy-add more sentences and correct spelling and punctuation where needed. The sentences are again read to the cross-age tutors when completed.
10. The sloppy copies are then collected by the teacher and given to a parent volunteer.
11. A parent volunteer takes the students and assists them in typing the sentences on a computer. The volunteer has enough knowledge of

computers to assist the students in learning the keyboard and shortcuts on the keyboard. The students read the sentences again to the parent volunteer. The students then print out the sentences. These are now first grade versions of newspaper articles. The parent volunteer collects the newspaper articles and sloppy copies. When all of the students have typed and printed out their sentences, the teacher returns the sloppy copies and newspaper articles for the students to illustrate. The sloppy copies are used as a foundation for the finished illustration.

12. The students refine the illustrations, adding details that were not present in the sloppy copy. Both the sloppy copy and the finished newspaper article are collected by the teacher. The sloppy copies are placed with the other journal pages for future use.
13. The newspaper articles are shrunk to a size that will fit on two folded 11x14 sheets of paper. There are eight pages all together. This is where the teacher must do cut and paste. The front page is devoted to the teacher informing the parents as to what will be going on in the classroom during the following week. The rest of the pages are taken up with the student newspaper articles. The number of student articles on a page is determined by the number of students divided by the remaining blank pages. The teacher then takes the pages and runs them off on a copy machine.
14. Each student receives a copy of the newspaper to take home.
15. At the end of each month the teacher passes out all of the journal pages. There can be up to 16-18 for the month. The students assess which two they consider their best. These two are collected by the teacher and placed in student portfolios. At the end of the school year there are 20 sample writings in each portfolio.

Assessment/Evaluation:

The daily Circle Time allows the teacher to help the students improve their speaking and reading skills. The newspaper articles and illustrations are used as assessment and evaluation tools. The collected journal pages that are kept in portfolios are also used for assessment and evaluation. The teacher walks around the classroom observing which students are able to work independently and which students need more assistance from the cross-age tutors. The teacher also observes the students as they work on the computers. Input from the parent volunteer is also valuable. A district wide rubric for student writing is being developed at this time. All assessments and evaluations are observations at this time.

Follow-up Activities:

Follow-up activities include the students reading their own newspaper articles to their classmates and parents. Students have been known to write stories that continue from week to week in the newspaper.

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