Pre-Observation Conference - Observer

REACH was built to provide better feedback to teachers to help them improve their practice and increase student learning. The first step in the formal observation series is the pre-observation conference, which is a meeting between the classroom teacher and the evaluator. The pre-observation conference will be held no more than five days prior to the classroom observation, and the lesson observed must be part of the unit that was discussed during the pre-observation conference. For example, if you and your evaluator discuss a math unit, then the observation should take place during a math lesson from the unit discussed, within five days of the pre-observation conference.

1. **Name of Educator:**
   Morales, Ivonne

   **Date of Pre-Observation Conference:**
   10/17/2014

   **Name of Observer:**
   Sussan Oladipo

   **Room Number:**
   211

   **Grade(s):**
   8

   **Subject(s):**
   English Language Arts

   **Learning Objectives (1c):**
   Standard: R.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
   Objectives: Students will be able to identify and explain the use of figurative language, in literary works to convey mood, images, and meaning, including metaphor, personification, and simile. Students will be able to begin to interpret different types of figurative language in their context.
   The objective directly aligns with R.8.4, which indicates that students should be able to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text. All students will be actively engaged in their learning through various activities which will incorporate discovery, sorting, social interactions with peers, and self-reflection of mastery. Students will be provided with direct instruction through the use of a PowerPoint presentation to visually engage students and to support students’ auditory and visual learning styles. Students will be provided with various levels of teacher support, along with accommodations, such as prompting and checking for understanding throughout the lesson. Students will assess their mastery at the end of the lesson to see if they have met the objectives for the lesson.

Pre-Observation Conference Protocol - Educator

While submitting written responses to this protocol is optional, you should be prepared to discuss the questions listed below at the pre-observation conference. The components on this protocol are organized to better facilitate the conversation about the unit and your practice. Your responses will help your evaluator understand your classroom and provide evidence for Domain 1. Use the component(s) listed with each question to align your responses to the CPS Framework for Teaching.
1a. Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy:
Consider including the following in your response:

- Content standards within and across grade levels and other disciplines (e.g. CCSS, NGSS)
- Disciplinary literacy and content specific instructional strategies
- Prerequisite learning and relationships among topics and concepts
- Content-Related Pedagogy
Briefly describe the unit/lesson you are teaching:

Suggestion: Upload or share your unit plan

Through a backwards planning process, called Understanding by Design, Literacy Unit 1 was created. Together, the 8th grade Literacy team determined which standards and content we wanted our students to learn in order to be successful on both district-wide assessments and classroom assessments. We then discussed what understandings our students should have of the content. Next, we created essential questions and looked at the knowledge and skills students should leave with. We based our assessments on those varied components. The activities, experiences, and lessons outlined in the unit plan and weekly lesson plans will lead students to the desired results allowing them to be successful, with at least 80% mastery, on all the assessments. The experiences will vary and incorporate the various learning styles (i.e. visual, auditory, etc.) and interests of the students (i.e. conflict, relationships, etc.).

The purpose of this 10-week literacy unit plan is to engage students through a variety of activities designed around the question: How is power attained, held, shared and withheld between or among groups in societies? This question will allow students to investigate certain power relationships, while students use their own prior knowledge to compare and contrast those relationships to their own lives. Students will be motivated to investigate different power structures that exist in the society they live in, as well as societies during the WWII era. Additionally, students will learn, practice, and apply a variety of QTEL and other vocabulary-related strategies, while using informational and literary text.

The content standards that are incorporated in the unit include:

Primary Standards Addressed
RI.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text
R.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

Secondary Standards Addressed

For this lesson in particular, the learning objective is for students to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used and interpret them. The learning objectives that must be met by the end of the unit are that students be able to provide supporting evidence, cite text, and compose a concise summary and determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used and analyze its impact. All the learning objectives that drive this unit are standards-based, are varied to account for individual students’ needs, written in the form of student learning, and aligned to multiple methods of assessment.

The sequence of learning incorporates the study of the following Essential Questions:
1. What is power?
2. How is power attained, held, shared and withheld between or among groups in society?
3. How can power affect people and impact entire cultures?
4. How can different genres of text be used to inform opinions?
5. How does inquiry further our knowledge of topics?

The learning experiences in the sequence of learning include: hooks to develop conceptual understanding through related text and vocabulary, preparing students to read by having student previewing their text, close reading through think alouds, summarizing the text, application to essential questions, analyzing text to determine how individuals are influenced by culture, conduct discussions, write routinely, and report findings during group discussions, and so on.

The academic vocabulary highlighted in this lesson include: metaphor, personification, paradox, oxymoron, foreshadowing, symbolism, hyperbole, simile.

For this lesson in particular, the learning objective is for students to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used and interpret them. I will make sure that I clear up student misconceptions of how figurative language is used. Figurative language connects to the primary text, The Diary of Anne Frank, since it uses a great amount of figurative language and students must be able to identify the figurative language used and interpret them. Additionally, the skills stated in the objective are a part of the grade-level CCSS, which students must demonstrate mastery of.

1c. Selecting Learning Objectives:
Consider including the following in your response:
- Sequence of learning which builds to the mastery of all skills and concepts in this unit/lesson
- Varied types of learning incorporated to provide opportunities for coordination within and across disciplines
Briefly describe the standards-based learning objectives in this unit/lesson:

Standard: R.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Objectives: Students will be able to identify and explain the use of figurative language, in literary works to convey mood, images, and meaning, including metaphor, personification, and simile. Students will be able to begin to interpret different types of figurative language in their context.

The objective directly aligns with R.8.4, which indicates that students should be able to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text. All students will be actively engaged in their learning through various activities which will incorporate discovery, sorting, social interactions with peers, and self-reflection of mastery. Students will be provided with direct instruction through the use of a PowerPoint presentation to visually engage students and to support students’ auditory and visual learning styles. Students will be provided with various levels of teacher support, along with accommodations, such as prompting and checking for understanding throughout the lesson. Students will assess their mastery at the end of the lesson to see if they have met the objectives for the lesson.

1e. Designing Student Assessment:
Consider explaining the following in your response:

- Alignment between the objectives and the assessments
- Clearly identified and described expectations for student performance
- Design decisions related to prior assessment results and methods to ensure assessments measure students’ growth effectively

List and describe the formative and summative assessments for each objective planned for this unit/lesson:

Suggestion: Upload or share rubrics or other criteria you will use to measure growth or mastery of the objectives:

The following assessments will be utilized throughout the unit:

Diagnostic (Pre-Assessment)
1. Students will engage in a pre-writing activity by responding to the following prompt: Power can be defined as… and “In my life, the people I see that have power are… I think they are able to attain power by…"

Formative Assessments
1. Close Reading responses
2. Class discussions
3. Reader’s notebook reflections
4. Written summaries
5. Oral presentations
6. Multimedia presentations
7. Exit Slips
8. Self-Assessment Rubrics

Summative Performance Assessment
1. Performance Task (see attached assessment/scoring tool below)
2. Unit Content Test

1b. Demonstrating Knowledge of Students:
Consider including the following in your response:

- Strategies for gathering and using information about the backgrounds, abilities, needs and interests of your students
- Intervention and/or enrichment strategies to address individual student needs, learning styles and modalities
Briefly describe how your awareness of your students’ backgrounds, abilities, needs and interests impacted the planning of the unit/lesson:

With every new group of students that I work with, I examine the students’ backgrounds, cultures, prior knowledge, skills, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs. The learning needs of students vary tremendously in the 8th grade inclusion classroom, there are seven students who have IEPs and are provided with accommodations, modifications, and have learning goals for each quarter. There are also students who have yet to exit the ELL program. So, to support them, they receive a great deal of direct instruction in the area of vocabulary. Close-Reading and QTEL strategies are also provided on a weekly basis to the entire class to challenge and support them in language learning and use in meaningful contexts. Other incorporated instructional strategies include gradual release of responsibility, small group guided reading, independent reading, anticipatory set, checking for understanding, think-pair-share, turn-and-talk, jigsaw, and graphic organizers.

Instruction and learning activities are tailored to their needs, instructional abilities, and learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). This is done by providing leveled reading materials, a variety of activities which are at their instructional level and proximity levels, and opportunities for students to work in small groups. For example, for Jacob and Hector, who are performing significantly below grade level, will be provided with a sorting task with shorter phrases so that they could access the lesson at their current performance level. They will also be working in a small group and have peer and teacher support. The sorting activity is meant to accessible to all the students, at performing at various levels, including those in need of intervention and/or enrichment.

1d. Designing Coherent Instruction:
Consider including the following in your response:

- Alignment of the learning tasks to the objectives, students’ abilities, and texts, materials and resources
- Strategies for using instructional groups to differentiate support for your students’ learning needs
- Pacing and structure of the lessons

Briefly describe the coordination between your knowledge of your students, content and resources as you designed the lessons in this unit:

Standard: R.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Objectives: Students will be able to identify and explain the use of figurative language, in literary works to convey mood, images, and meaning, including metaphor, personification, and simile. Students will be able to begin to interpret different types of figurative language in their context.

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Upload Additional Evidence:

LiteracyUnit1grade8.docx

Is there anything else about your specific classroom dynamics (e.g. diverse learners, inclusion, resource, co-teaching, English learners, early childhood, the arts, physical education, etc.) that would be helpful for your school administrator to understand as he/she observes your classroom and rates evidence aligned to Domains 2 and 3 of the CPS Framework for Teaching?

The classroom is a co-taught, Language Arts classroom with seven students who have varying needs and IEPs. These students may be given varied accommodations, compared to the other students, as identified in their IEPs. For example, there are a couple of students who have been identified as having ADHD. These students are given the accommodation that when they feel the need to get up, they may be excused and use the washroom or have a drink of water and come back to the class and get back on-task. The co-teacher or I will then approach the student and catch them up with what they missed and what is expected of them. There are also other students with IEPs who need redirection every 5-10 minutes because they get easily distracted, disruptive, and off-task.