

## PLANNING COMMENTARY

**I Explain how your plans build on each other to help students make connections between the essential literacy strategy to comprehend OR compose text and related skills that support use of the strategy in meaningful context**

The lessons are strategically sequenced to advance as time goes on. The first lesson introduces non-fiction text features and the identifying factors for each feature. Students become familiar with the content to solidify their knowledge base for the subsequent lessons. They have practice exploring non-fiction texts by completing a non-fiction text scavenger hunt where they are required to correctly identify the nine features they have learned about. Educational theorist, Howard Gardner states that children learn through different modalities, which he calls, “multiple intelligences”. This is why each learning experience encompasses a myriad of different intelligences. This lesson allows students to interact directly with the text and is beneficial for all types of learners as it is implemented in a way that targets many learning styles. Next, in lesson 2 students have continued practice with non-fiction texts as a teacher reads a book aloud to the class, and models the appropriate way in which to find information. Also, in this lesson students are able to interact with their ideas by writing their own questions on post-it notes to be displayed for the class. The read-aloud and modeling done by the teacher gives students the language required to complete the task and thus enhances their literacy and language development. Finally, lesson 3 requires students to take the knowledge they have learned about non-fiction texts, and implement it into their own research study. This lesson targets many learning capacities as it incorporates visual, auditory, interpersonal and kinesthetic learning. Students are able to implement the interpersonal skills and abilities appropriate for their age through working in small groups. The standards addressed in these lessons require constant growth and improvement on the students’ part, and is assessed throughout each lesson as well as at the end of each lesson. All the lessons build up to the final culmination of the segment where students are asked to perform research about teeth to create their own page of a non-fiction text, and to exhibit understanding of all that was taught and learned. Thus, each day is sequenced, developmental, and scaffolded to build proficiency.

In this lesson segment, students will develop competencies in reading and interpersonal relationship contexts. The competencies, based on the standards, are the skills and strategies that students will learn in order to identify features within non-fiction texts, how to use non-fiction texts to perform their own research, and how to work in a small group in order to show their ability to create their own non-fiction page of a book. Based on the aforementioned points, it is crucial that the learning segment focuses not only on reading but also on interpersonal skills because the developmentally appropriate skills that students are expected to be building in 1<sup>st</sup> grade are all about making connections between reading and everyday life encounters to show students what it means to be a life-long learner. Students are not only expected to be learning to become more proficient readers, but also to sharpen their listening and speaking skills. The students will have extensive support going through the steps of these processes by following clear criteria for success for each learning experience. So they go from first reading the text, and they are then scaffolded into the process of creating their own non-fiction text portion.

**II Describe and justify why your instructional strategies and planned supports are appropriate for the whole class, individuals, and/or groups of students with specific learning needs.**

Since all learning experiences within the learning segment begin with a whole-group discussion activity, I am able to pre-teach some students depending on their needs. Specifically, students with audio-processing delays, speech interferences, or ELL's, are given a brief and private introduction to the topic so that they will be prepared for the whole-group lesson. For example, when first asking a question to the whole class, I allow the students to have 3-5 seconds of think time before they are allowed to raise their hands. This enhances student participation regardless of their academic level. ELL's and students with language and auditory processing disorders often benefit from having more time to collect their thoughts. However, gifted children will often raise their hands immediately or blurt out answers. In order to decrease the academic gap within the classroom, providing students with this "think time" gives more students an opportunity to share their thoughts, and causes less intimidation for the students who can't answer questions immediately. In addition, once each vocabulary word or concept has been presented, visual cues are always available on the SmartBoard while students are engaged in the activities within this learning segment. This gives students a chance to see visual representations of words, along with the written word next to it. In addition to providing students with language support, students who have difficulty sitting in a meeting are given the opportunity to sit in a chair to allow their bodies to be more comfortable, and provide the students with a higher rate of success and learning. Many of the students in my class who receive occupational therapy often have a difficult time sitting in one position, especially for extended periods of time. By implementing kinesthetic activities, students will be able to move freely around the classroom area, and work in positions and ways that they are most comfortable and work best for them

**III Describe how your planned formal and informal assessments will provide direct evidence that students can use the essential literacy strategy to comprehend OR compose text AND related skills throughout the learning segment.**

[Throughout the learning segment, there will be multiple opportunities for informal and formal assessments. For example, in Learning Experience 1 I will assess students through using a simple checklist with three columns to determine whether students are able to complete a task "independently", "with peer-support" or "with teacher-support". It is important for me as the teacher to see which students understood the instructions and the lesson well enough to complete the task independently. This includes the accommodations made for students with special needs and learning requirements.

For Learning Experience 2, I will assess students' questions that were written on post-it notes to make sure they are relevant to the criteria, which requires students to ask questions about teeth. If there are students who are not able to ask questions about teeth, it will show me that a review and a different approach are necessary to accurately express the learning objective.

The final assessments that will be done through Learning Experience 3 – a culminating activity – are both formal and informal. The informal assessment of this task is making sure that students choose non-fiction texts that will allow them to answer their questions. The ability to do this will prove that students can use either the index or glossary of a non-fiction text to find the information they are looking for. This will show that students have learned the different functions of the nine features of non-fiction texts that were learned. The formal assessment for the entire learning segment will be completed through the final activity where students will create a class-made non-fiction text about teeth. Students will be working in small groups, and will need to meet four specific criteria for success. These include: a title, 2-3 captions on the page where students will write the information they have researched about the topic, at least one photograph and/or labeled diagram that is relevant to the research topic, and bold words which are words that the reader may be unsure of, and will be further explained in the glossary.]

**IV Explain how the design or adaptation of your planned assessments allows students with specific needs to demonstrate their learning.**

As mentioned previously, the learning needs of all students were considered when writing the learning segment. Assessments were also adapted to meet children where they are on the learning continuum