

Power Tools: First Grade Information Writing

Summary

The focus of the lesson is an introduction to writing informative text. The lesson cycle is taught three times, each with a different topic, and with decreased teacher support and increased independent writing. The research topics are spiders, bats and owls but topics can be changed to fit classroom study. Research is done through shared reading and videos. Graphic organizers are introduced and used in writing. Students write three or more complete sentences on the topic.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 1

[Writing Standard 2](#)

Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 1

[Language Standard 2 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 1

[Language Standard 2 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 1

[Language Standard 2 d.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 1

[Language Standard 2 e.](#)

Time Frame

7 class periods of 30 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Materials

Materials include a variety of nonfiction read aloud books about spiders, bats and owls, along with support videos on Youtube. My playlist is public at Room 7 science. In an attempt to simplify the numerous sites that I use during the teaching day, I have created a school Symbaloo. It is also public and is titled Schoolmix. As with all writing, chart paper, markers and writing materials are also needed.

Background for Teachers

Familiarity with Core writing standards.

Student Prior Knowledge

The lesson begins with a chart of background knowledge. Students need control of basic sentence structure including capitalization, spaces and punctuation. Students should be able to access the word wall for support in writing.

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Core Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) include: students will demonstrate a positive learning attitude, students will understand and use basic concepts and skills and students will communicate

clearly in oral and written forms.

Instructional Procedures

Day 1: teacher leads discussion and creates a chart of background knowledge on spiders (or other topic) Think Pair Share is a good opening strategy. Day 2-4: teacher uses nonfiction read aloud books with good picture support, pictures and videos to increase knowledge of topic. Day 5: teacher and students create class graphic organizer of important facts about spiders. These beginning graphic organizers heavily support basic sentence construction: spiders have eight legs, spiders have two body parts, spiders have many eyes, spiders make silk from their backsides, the silk begins as liquid, like water, spiders hide in dark places, some spiders, like the Black Widow, are poisonous. The teacher transfers the class organizer into individual graphic organizers. As students become more proficient, they will create their own organizers. Day 6: students write short informative text with opening topic sentence "I know a lot about spiders." Students write at least three information sentences about spiders and draw an accurate spider diagram. Day 7: students use self check rubric to evaluate their writing.

Strategies for Diverse Learners

Proficient writers are encouraged to write more about spiders, including factual information not on the graphic organizer. The organizer has small picture clues for struggling students. Beginning writers can use the word wall and the organizer to write complete sentences. For example, in the sentence "All spiders have eight legs." the words all and have are on the wall and spiders, eight and legs come directly from the organizer.

Extensions

The introduction of labeled diagrams works well with spiders because the diagram of the spider must show two body parts, eight legs and multiple eyes.

Assessment Plan

Teacher edits papers and then students check the edits and use a basic self assessment check list to evaluate their writing. A smiling face means "all," a straight mouth face means "some" and a sad face means "not yet." The check list includes: Is your name on the paper? How is your handwriting? Are there three sentences about spiders? Do your sentences begin with a capital letter? Are there spaces between your words? Do your sentences end with a period? Additionally, while students are writing a check chart is posted with reminders to capitalize, use spaces between words, use punctuation and use the word wall.

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