

Lesson Plan for Henrico 21

Lesson Title: Critical Reading with Google Docs

Lesson Submission Number: 6401

Target Grade/Subject: 10th Grade English/Language Arts

Length: One Day (45-minute periods) for each piece of writing considered (depending on length of text)

Summary:

To help students improve their critical reading skills, students used Google Docs to collaboratively annotate song lyrics, poems, and short stories. Students first worked individually, highlighting and commenting on parts of the text that interested or confused them. Then, in small groups, they shared their annotations and added the ones they felt were most interesting to a shared document. After a class discussion of the annotations, students returned to write individual analyses of the texts.

Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to “construct a reading” of a text?
 - How do readers decide what aspects of a text to focus on when making a reading of a text?
 - What makes a particular reading of a text more or less valid than another reading?
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Lesson Development:

- Teachers introduced the concept of “noticing” while reading, which involves reading actively with an eye towards anything that stands out, seems interesting, or is puzzling. In this way, the focus is not on arriving at an answer or interpretation, but merely noticing what is happening in the text and how they are responding to it.
- The text is provided through a Google Doc that is shared with all students in the class. For the independent reading, students are directed to make a copy of the document and use the highlighting and commenting features in Google Docs to complete the steps below.
- Independent reading: students are directed to read a selection three times.
 - On the first reading, students should write down what they find interesting, troubling, or difficult to understand, along with any questions or reactions. After the first read, students are directed to rate their understanding of the selection on a scale of 0 to 10.
 - On the second reading, students should do the same, but also write down what changed about what they notice or understand during this second reading.
 - For the third reading, students should do the same. However, after this reading, they should also write a brief account of what happened to their understanding over the course of the three readings, along with any questions they still have. Finally, they should rate their understanding again using the same scale.
- Group discussion: after students have completed the above independently, they form small groups (3 to a group is ideal) to discuss their findings. They are directed to share their document with the other group members and then move around the group discussing what they noticed, what their understanding of the piece is at this point, and any questions they still have.
- Whole-class annotation: after the groups discuss, each group should choose one representative to

return to the original document that was shared with the entire class. On this document, each representative should share the annotations and questions from the group that they found most interesting, insightful, or intriguing.

- Whole-class discussion: once all groups have shared their annotations, the teacher will lead a discussion through the annotations and questions each group contributed to the whole-class document.
 - Individual reflection: following the whole-class discussion, students should return to their individual documents and reflect again on their understanding of the piece. Students are directed to focus on: how their understanding changed through group and whole-class discussion, what things they noticed remain the most interesting to them and why, and what questions they continue to have about the piece.
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TIP Chart Assessment:

(Using the TIP Chart, identify which level (e.g. entry, developing, approaching, ideal/target) your lesson falls in for each of the categories below and write a brief statement to describe what the students are doing as it relates to the indicators on the TIP chart.)

Categories

Research and Information Fluency:

This lesson did not focus on research as the texts were provided and students were discouraged from seeking outside information on the texts before they completed their annotations and initial reflections. As a result, this lesson was not rated for research and information fluency.

Communication and Collaboration

One of the objectives of this lesson was to introduce students to working collaboratively in Google Docs, so initially, the work was directed by the teacher. However, over the three days in which this lesson occurred, students progressed from directed work to more self-directed use of the tool. Initially, students worked independently to annotate texts, then worked in groups to learn how to annotate a document together. By the third day, students were asked to make decisions about annotations, group formation, and group annotations without direct teacher instruction. As a result, this lesson scores in the approaching range for communication and collaboration.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Another objective of this lesson was to empower students to ask their own questions of a text and to value the things they notice, find interesting, or find difficult in a text as a starting point for critical analysis. As such, students were asked simply to highlight words and phrases that caught their attention for whatever reason, positively or negatively. On a second reading, students were asked to make comments about the highlights that were still interesting or difficult to them on the second reading, indicating why they thought they had made these highlights. During group discussion, students compared their highlights and reasons and tried to come to a better understanding of the portions of the text that were worth notice and why, and a clearer formulation of the questions they still had about the text. Next, through a full-class discussion, students shared and discovered common readings of the text. Finally, students were asked to return to the text and write about their individual reading of it, taking into account the points raised in discussion, but making decisions about the reading that made sense to them individually. Over the three days of this lesson, the complexity of the text increased and the direct teacher guidance decreased. As a result, this lesson scores in the approaching range for critical thinking and problem solving.

Creativity and Innovation

Students were encouraged to notice and ask questions about aspects of the text that were significant to them. Through discussions, they were able to clarify their thoughts on the text and discover new ideas about it. When they returned to write their individual analysis, they constructed a reading of the text that pulled from discussions but ultimately relied on their own interpretation of what they noticed and wondered. As a result of this analysis and individual meaning-making, this lesson scores in the approaching range for creativity and innovation.