

Engaging English

Winter 2013

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Lesson Planning—Are you Integrating Skills!

First of all, remember that a good lesson...

- Is based on the standards and what students need to know
- Addresses various learning styles and levels
- Is developed to address real-world concerns of the student
- Is based upon previous knowledge
- Uses motivational techniques
- Includes necessary materials
- Is student centered, flexible, complete, interesting & activity based
- Includes evaluation process

To ensure that our students actually “keep” the learning, we have to start with interesting,

rich texts and build from there. As you pick texts, you need to ask yourself...

- Will students gain something from this reading that will relate to their lives/future/understanding of society?
- Does this reading help to address several standards on the pacing guide

Then, as you read the selection, keep the standards in mind, be an active reader and note...

- Vocabulary
- Background information students may need to understand a concept/situation
- Syntax and language
- Possible text pairings
- Extension project ideas

When you take your reading notes and put them all together, you should have a lesson that addresses...

- Vocabulary
- Media
- Non-fiction
- Poetry
- Literary Elements
- Grammar
- Writing

And finally, don't forget to guide students through the learning. Make sure to...

- Provide/Explain/State/Identify content concepts
- Model the skill
- Check for understanding
- Give guided practice
- Have independent practice
- Assess
- Provide closure

Join me on Diigo

What is Diigo?

Diigo is a free social bookmarking tool created to mimic the ease of taking notes while providing a network for sharing and discovering information.

What Does Diigo Do?

Diigo allows you to take personal notes and highlight text information on web pages just as you would on a piece of paper. You can then bookmark and save this information for further review, while adding tags to keep everything organized. In bookmarking this information, you can also choose to share with colleagues and friends to allow them to access the web page, view your notes and highlights, and add their own annotations.

Let's Share!

First, create your own Diigo account (<https://www.diigo.com>). Then, go to the following site: <https://groups.diigo.com/group/hcps-secondary-english>. Click “Apply to join it” and then we can start sharing resources!



Engaging English

“Teachers must become facilitators in their classrooms because when students ask questions and find the answers for themselves, they get involved in their own learning.”

Are you Giving or Guiding Annotation and Essay Writing in your Classroom?

Are you getting frustrated that students are not annotating or writing as expected. Have you looked at your teaching practices surrounding these two items. Though it may be easy to give students a passage and tell them to annotate it or give students a prompt and tell them to complete an essay, that is not an effective way to get students thinking and completing the tasks thoroughly. All students need to be guided through learning.

When you have students annotate texts, make sure to give them...

- Guiding questions in the margins of the text (or on a form). Questions should lead students to figure out vocabulary, think about the deeper meaning and/or

get them looking at the bigger picture

- Text Codes. You can give students codes to use while reading and require that they use so many during a reading to ensure they pay attention to the reading
- Question prompts. Tell students what they need to do with a passage (e.g. what surprised you about the passage, add on to what someone has said, connect the passage to a personal experience, etc.)
- Samples of good annotations.



When you have students write essays, please...

- Use various brainstorming maps
- Lead students through each step of writing
- Focus on the thesis statement and details (it is not important for students to write out their body paragraphs; it is more important to get them writing strong introductions with a solid thesis statement, listing out the details to support that statement and writing a strong conclusion. This puts the focus on the ideas, not how many body paragraphs they have!)
- Do not put students in the box of a 5 paragraph essay!

Important English Dates

December 2-11
December 11-20
January 6-24
March 10-21
March 31-May 2
March 31-May 2
May 8 (8am)
May 9 (8am)
May 5-June 6

Benchmark Testing Window—High Schools
Benchmark Testing Window—Middle Schools
Interim Level Set for Achieve Completed
Writing SOL Testing Window
NWEA Testing Window
SOL Simulation Testing Window
AP Literature and Composition Exam
AP Language and Composition Exam
SOL Testing Window