

#### **Task 4-Analyzing Teaching Commentary Template**

- 1. If you could teach these lessons to the same group of students again, what are two or three things you would do differently to improve the learning of these students based on their varied developmental and academic needs and characteristics? Consider missed opportunities and other aspects of planning, instruction and/or assessment.**

In reflecting upon my learning segment, there are significant changes that I would make in my instructional plans to create a learning environment that would have been more conducive to the academic abilities of my third grade students. These specific changes would include using the Descartes to create an extensive poetry unit plan, the implementation of an initial student assessment, additional time allocated to provide further modeling and supports for students in accordance to the syllabication process involved with creating haikus, and lastly, the use of differentiated haiku poems during independent practice. Using the Descartes to guide my instructional plans would prove beneficial so as to be able to create lessons and activities that would support the learning and skills that are reflective for third grade students. Integrating the learning facets of the Descartes would have allowed me to also create and present a Poetry Unit Plan to students that would have been prepared to embrace an untraditional form of written expression that was different from the extended responses that had been preparing for all year. The unit plan would include time to teach and incorporate guide and independent student practice with several types of poetry. In implementing the unit plan, an initial assessment would be utilized to gauge student background knowledge on poetry, syllables, and figurative language. The assessment would have been implemented about two weeks prior to commencing the poetry unit plan so as data would have guided the instructional plan and identified what specific skills students need additional support in, as well as their strengths in working with the poetry genre. The unit plan would also allow for an identified time segment for each type of poetry to support and enhance a progression of learning in poetry. Examining how much difficulty students had with the syllabication patterns in the Haiku learning segment, I would have spent more time modeling how to identify the syllables in words, identifying words into categories by the amount of syllables in identified syllables, as well as to also integrate syllabication into one of the centers during differentiated reading. In order to differentiate for the needs of all students within the classroom setting, independent practice would include different haiku poems for each of the students based upon the assessment of the syllabication exit tickets, as well as data from the initial unit assessment.

- 2. Citing evidence from your experience teaching this learning segment, explain why you would expect these changes to make a difference for students' learning.**

In observing the videos of my learning segment, and assessing student samples, I notice that there were several missed opportunities to enhance and support student learning of essential skills and concepts. Specifically, with not having known any initial information about what students knew about poetry, I feel that throughout the learning segment, a majority of the students expressed some anguish and discomfort in creating haikus because of the constraints of expressing thoughts that were limited to three lines. Utilizing the initial assessment would have allowed me to present information about poetry in a more concrete and sequential fashion, if the data showed that students were not comfortable and secure with the structures and formats of poetry. Utilizing the data provided from initial assessments would have indicated what types of lessons and activities to construct in order to present new concepts about poetry and the different styles of each specific poem. In observing the video, I noticed that students were not fully engaged in the group syllabication demonstration when using our fingers to identify syllables within specific words. Allotting additional time and practice in small group instruction or centers

during differentiated reading would have allowed more time to gauge what students understood about the syllabication process and identifying appropriate words, as well as allot time to work exclusively with a small group of students who may have needed further support. Utilizing time during differentiated reading groups, would have also allowed for me to identify specific poems that were reflective of the student ability groups.

As I look towards improving my practice, I feel that I definitely need to include specific patterns and trends throughout the implementation of my instructional plans. I definitely needed to provide more explicit modeling to students, specifically when identifying the number of syllables in words and how to check that each line fulfilled the syllabication pattern of each line of the haiku. Along with modeling, checking in with the lowest three students to provide additional support should have been part of my circulation and checking for understanding processes. In assessing student work, I realize the value of how providing immediate feedback on student work samples would have been beneficial to students to monitor their progress, as well as check their work during whole group instruction while exit tickets and Do Now's were reviewed. Specific student exit tickets that required for students to identify words from a vocabulary word bank, showed that students were specifically selecting words that they felt completed the sentence, without taking into consideration the amount of syllables allocated for the 5-7-5 syllabication pattern. Providing students with immediate feedback or conferring with small groups would have allowed for students to gain a reminder of the 5-7-5 structure, as well as to work together to re-do the exit ticket to identify the word that would have completed the specific line.

**3. What actions will you take for your own improved practice and professional development when teaching this unit, or another unit, in the future?**

In order to improve my teaching practices for the future implementation of a poetry unit plan, I will reference the following resource: Teaching for Comprehending Fluency: Thinking, Talking, and Writing about Reading, K-8 from Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell. Utilizing this resource would influence and support my future practice and will help me identify an action plan that is conducive to the learning styles of my students. Fountas and Pinnell discuss and provide the framework for the different features and elements of poetry. They discuss the aspects of introducing the language components associated with few words and phrases, as well as discuss the specific elements of using language that "evokes meaning and emotion" (pg 140). The text supports the idea of integrating different genres to support student thinking while emphasizing several student strategies to support student comprehension. Their framework would provide an outline for the progression of how the different styles of poetry could be presented to students, beginning with free verse, and then working onto lyric, narrative, limerick, cinquain, concrete, and finally haiku poetry. Debbie Diller's book *Literacy Work Stations*, would also prove to be a beneficial resource in creating effective poetry work stations where students can practice different skills as partnerships and independently. Diller discusses several strategies that can be incorporated while the teacher models, specifically focusing on reading with fluency, determining specific patterns within poems, and how to make connections to the poems. Each of the stations during independent practice allows for students to work on specific skills such as the manipulation of words and phrases and most importantly, Diller emphasizes the critical component of having students read poems aloud to each other for the purposes of enjoyment and to continue to develop their fluency.