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Lesson overview

Subject: English/Language Arts

Grade: 2nd, but can easily be adapted for other elementary grades

Topic: Developing characters

Concepts: Change

Essential questions: How do authors develop characters throughout a book? What writing strategies do authors use to help us learn about the characters?

Objectives

❖ Students will know:

Character is an important literary element.
While some characteristics are written in a story, others must be inferred.
Authors use details to “paint a picture” of a character.

❖ Students will understand that:

characters develop throughout a work of literature. (lesson understand)
Student language: Characters change from the beginning to the end of a book.
the use of literary elements help authors create a clear and purposeful story. (unit understand)
Student language: Good stories have relatable characters and an interesting plot and setting.

❖ Students will be able to do:

Use details to develop a character.

**Checking points.*

- Do the “Know” objectives cover the essential information to be learned?
- Are the “Understand” objectives big and transferable ideas of the discipline?
- Are the “Do” objectives are observable and measurable? Do they encompass essential skills?
- Do the KUDs “fit together”-in other words, will they come together coherently?

Lesson sequence

Lesson Sequence	REFLECTION
Time allocation: 1-2 classes	
Resources: <i>Knuffle Bunny, A Cautionary Tale</i> by Mo Willems <i>Knuffle Bunny Too, A Case of Mistaken Identity</i> by Mo	

<p>Willems Whiteboard or chart paper and markers Pictures of people – can be photographs, drawings, cartoons, etc.</p>	
<p><i>Strategies for learning profile differentiation:</i> Differentiation based on grouping – individual or pairs Differentiation based on Sternberg’s 3 Intelligences</p>	<p>Allowing choice during grouping enables students to work within their learning style. Some students learn best working by themselves, while others prefer to work with others and discuss their ideas out loud.</p> <p>Sternberg’s 3 Intelligences focus on the child’s “internal wiring” – who they are and how they best learn and demonstrate that learning, either through analytical, practical, or creative means.</p>
<p><i>Introduction</i> <i>Last class we learned about parts of a story. Who can tell me the three parts of a story? We are going to continue learning about elements that make up good stories. This will help us when we write our own stories. Today we are going to learn about the importance of character in a book and we will discover how characters change over time.</i></p>	<p>The introduction is designed to introduce the objective and connect it with the students’ prior knowledge. The students had previously engaged in lessons about the parts of a story/plot and setting.</p> <p>The students are learning about various literary elements and will conclude the unit by writing a story as a class that incorporates those elements.</p>
<p><i>Teaching strategies and learning experiences</i> The teacher will read <i>Knuffle Bunny</i> aloud to the class. As she reads, she will draw students’ attention to the pictures, asking students what they notice about the pictures, settings, and plot (covered in previous lessons). At the end of the book, she will ask the students to tell her how Trixie changed throughout the book. She will explain that in books, the characters grow and change. She will also ask the students to tell her what they now know about Trixie. As the students brainstorm, the teacher will write their answers on the board/chart paper. The teacher will then read to the class <i>Knuffle Bunny Too</i>. At the end of the book she will ask the students to tell her how Trixie changed from the beginning of the book to the end of the book. Then she will ask the students to tell her what they now</p>	<p>By using two books, the students can see that characters develop throughout stories, and these stories can be in one book or</p>

know about Trixie that they did not know at the end of the first book. She will write down their answers. *How is it that we now know so much about Trixie? What do authors do that help us learn about characters? Did Mo Willems tell us everything we know about Trixie or did we have to infer a little? Do you think it is enough just to know what a character looks like? What are some other things authors sometimes tell us about the character (ex. dreams, feelings, hobbies)?* The teacher will write student ideas on the board.

Students will be given a choice to either work individually or in pairs. Each student or pair will receive one picture of a character. The students will answer/discuss the following: *What are some things you know about this character just by looking at the picture? What are some things you'd like to know about the character?* Students working individually will write down their ideas, while students working together will discuss their ideas. The teacher will then gather the class back together and discuss the students' findings. *If this person was a character in your own story, how would you tell the reader about this person?*

The students will be given three options for independent practice. Each option focuses on using details to develop a character.

Analytical:

Students will select a picture (one they have not used in the previous activity) and will create a web or other organizer of their choice that describes the character. Students may look to the picture for ideas about visual characteristics, but should also create characteristics of their own that someone would not initially realize but would have to infer.

Practical:

Students will think about and select a person they know in real life who would be a good character in their own story. Students will describe their character, both the obvious visual characteristics and the characteristics that people would not know initially and may have to infer.

Creative:

An author is writing a new book and can't come up with a good main character, so he hosts a contest. It is your job to create a character for his book. Describe the character – looks, personality, likes, dislikes, etc. The description should include

continued in a series.

The questions are designed to get students to arrive at the following conclusions: authors use details to describe characters; readers sometimes have to infer things about the characters; there are limitless possibilities for describing a character.

This learning experience takes into account the context for learning. Some students learn best when they have quiet time to reflect while others need to discuss their ideas. This activity is designed to prepare students for their independent practice. The activity can also be easily differentiated by interest – ex. students interested in sports can be given pictures of a sports figure.

For young children, the teacher may want to design several webs and graphic organizers that the students can choose from.

Each of the independent practice options requires that students use the details we discussed in class to create a character. The students will describe the apparent characteristics, as well as characteristics that may not be quite so evident. This is helpful on our unit on literary elements. Students need to learn to think about characters before they jump into their story. As we begin preparing and brainstorming for our own class story, students will

<p>visual characteristics and characteristics that would not be obvious simply by looking at the character, but would have to be inferred.</p>	<p>have to think about the characters they want to include in the story (culminating activity for the unit).</p>
<p><i>Closure</i> <i>How do authors tell us about a character? What are some things we learn about characters when reading a book? Can characters change? How so? Why are characters important?</i></p> <p>If time allows, students who wish to may share their character with the class.</p>	<p>The closure questions are designed to provide a review of the objectives and to extend student thinking. A follow-up lesson will include discovering more about how characters change over time.</p>