



Classroom Assessments

Judy Rex is known for her skills in differentiated education, and her principal assessment method during the second part of her reading/writing workshop was student observation. In this lesson, she watched for certain student behaviors, which she had previously modeled.

Attention to student responses

She paid careful attention to student responses and provided feedback when they were sharing their choices of powerful words in the large group after finishing their small group activities.

Applications

She watched her students to see whether they could infer the meaning of new words and phrases from their reading and then use them correctly. (For example, she discussed with one small group of students the meaning of the phrase “Robocat could smell crime in the air”).

Focused Activities

During the differentiated small group activity, she had her students check various text selections to see if they could find meaningful words. This was actually an assessment to see whether they understood what meaningful words were.

Skills in Small Group Activities

She carefully watched her students when they were searching for meaningful words within their groups. She was clearly watching to see how well they could perform the activities (for instance, she knew that some of the students working at the computers were not as skilled on the machines as the other students).

Questioning Skills

She also expected her students to understand certain concepts, and she questioned them during the lesson to determine how well they understood them. She questioned them about:

- how to distinguish powerful words from everyday words
- how powerful words create images and emotions in our minds
- how to move from everyday words to powerful words through word choice
- how to use everyday words in a powerful way, and..
- where to find synonyms if you need to verify the meaning of a word.

Use of a Rubric

Judy had her students use a simple 4-point rubric as a self-assessment after they finished their activities. Students evaluated themselves, and she did not record the results. This placed the responsibility directly on the students.

In addition to observation, Judy would also be assessing her students’ understanding by having them create writing samples and then evaluating them individually.