

{Classroom Observation}

4th grade

September 4

9:50 AM- 10:10 AM

Mentor Student: "Nathan"

21 students total (10 boys and 11 girls ~ 9 African American, 12 Latino)

Notes Gathered:

During this Reading block, the focus of Ms. Lawson's lesson is "Text to Text Connections." She begins with a mini lesson, reviewing "text to self" connections from the previous day and explains to the students what a "text to text" connection is. She pulls up a chart and asks the students to use it to give examples of other books that they can connect to the book they are reading as a class, "The Hot and Cold Summer" by Joanna Hurwitz. Ms. Lawson tells them to reread a short section in the book to refresh their memories before filling out the chart. In observing Nathan I notice that he struggles to focus on the task at hand. He sits in the front of the room, right in front of the smart board. The classroom desks are placed in pairs and he sits next to a fairly quiet and hard-working student. Before Ms. Lawson even begins the lesson, the girl that sits behind him kicks his chair in an attempt to receive some sort of reaction. He chooses just to turn around to give her a "look" and she stopped. During the time that Ms. Lawson was explaining the mini lesson and giving directions, Nathan played with his pencil on his desk and made popping noises with his mouth. I also notice that he looks around the room instead of fixing his eyes on the smart board: he looks to his left, his right, up on the ceiling, and down and the floor. (In my opinion, I think he was simply uninterested in the material being discussed, and therefore he chose to check out mentally. I have seen him be extremely engaged during both science and math block.) Once the directions are given and Ms. Lawson releases the students to work, most students opened their book to begin rereading the section from "The Hot and Cold Summer"; however Nathan did not open his book. The students receive a snack and Nathan chews loudly and goofily while leaning in to look at the student beside him. He digs through his desk for about two minutes. Next he looks up at the smart board in an attempt to reread the directions and he begins to draw the chart given by Ms. Lawson in his reading journal. He opens his book and slowly finds the correct page to begin reading. As soon as he finds the right page, he gets out of his seat. He walks around Ms. Lawson's desk, sits back down, then he raises his hand to ask if he can go back to the trash can to throw away the remainder of his snack. Once he is seated, he raises his hand again to tell Ms. Lawson that he doesn't understand what to write in the chart. She decides to clarify for the whole class.

Reflection:

I feel that the information I gathered from this observation is very helpful, especially before I begin the assessment process with Nathan. It is imperative for teachers to know their students and the primary ways we can do this is by listening to

what they say and observing what they do. This can tell you a lot about what a students' interests are, what their strengths are, and in what ways they are struggling. As I have observed Nathan the past couple of weeks, I have noticed that he seems to be uninterested in reading and writing. During whole group instruction, he struggles to focus or complete the tasks that are given. Working with him one on one, I have noticed that he has a hard time getting through one page of reading and struggles to decode words. I feel that his lack of focus could be linked to his struggle to read, because he gets frustrated. If a student feels like they will not be able to succeed at something, they will most likely not attempt it. Observation will be key throughout the semester in order to see the real help Nathan needs.

In talking with my mentor teacher about Nathan, she seems to see many of the good qualities in him and talks about his potential. She mentions that she too noticed that he has a hard time focusing sometimes, and this was her reasoning for putting him in the front of the room. I do not think she realizes how much he truly struggles to read though. Because the majority of our students are well below reading level, it is most likely difficult for her to know who needs the *most* focused attention, because we have so many that struggle. I am looking very forward to working with Nathan throughout the semester in hopes to see much growth in literacy.

{Reading Attitude Survey}

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scoring Sheet

Student Name Nasir "Nathan"

Teacher MS. Lawson / Student Teacher : B. Shields

Grade 4th Administration Date 9/11/13

Scoring Guide

4 points	Happiest Garfield
3 points	Slightly smiling Garfield
2 points	Mildly upset Garfield
1 point	Very upset Garfield

Recreational reading

1. 3
2. 3
3. 2
4. 1
5. 3
6. 4
7. 2
8. 3
9. 3
10. 3

Raw Score: 27

Academic reading

1. 2
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. 3
6. 1
7. 3
8. 2
9. 2
10. 1

Raw Score: 20

Full scale raw score (Recreational + Academic): 47

Percentile ranks: Recreational

35

..... Academic

16

..... Full scale

20

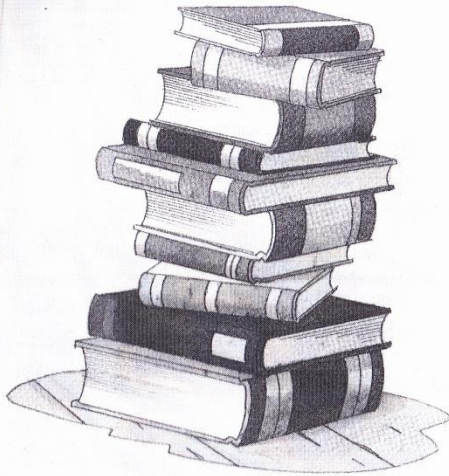
Reading Attitude Survey Reflection
September 11
10:30- 11:00 AM

I decided to give the “Elementary Reading Attitude Survey” (The Garfield Survey) to Nathan. I had Ms. Lawson’s permission to pull him out into the hallway during literacy block to administer the survey. I approached this time by asking Nathan if he thought he could help me with some of my UGA homework. He smiled and said, “I’ll try.” I told him that I wanted him to help me understand how he feels about reading both inside and outside the classroom. I decided to read each question to him so that he could concentrate more on his answer and less on trying to read each question. He pondered each question and seemed to think carefully about each answer.

There were a few times that I asked him to explain to me why he circled a particular Garfield. For example, number 8 asks, “How do you feel about reading instead of playing?” Nathan chose to circle the slightly smiling Garfield. I said, “Wow! So you would rather spend time reading than playing basketball? Why is that?” His answer shocked me. He said, “Well, yes because I really want to get better at reading. So if I practice a lot, I’ll get better.” I was so encouraged to hear these words come out of his mouth! I feel that when a student *wants* to learn this motivates them toward growth and improvement. I was honestly expecting Nathan to react negatively to most of the questions, simply because of the observations I have made during our ELA block. However, I discovered through this survey that he *is* interested in reading and *wants* to improve. Maybe he just doesn’t know how to do so. I am looking forward to spending more focused time with Nathan in regards to reading. There is much room for improvement, but because he is motivated, I feel that I will see much progress throughout the semester.

In discussing this survey with Ms. Lawson, she did not seem surprised at Nathan’s enthusiasm toward improving in reading. She said, “Nathan is a student that knows he is behind. He is aware that he is not at the reading level he should be, but he also wants to be able to read fluently. He puts the effort in. I enjoy watching him each day, because I can tell when my students are truly using their brains. His efforts will get him far.” I am glad that these were the sentiments given by Ms. Lawson, because it goes to show that she knows her students. I feel that this is one of the most vital aspects of being a teacher. I admire her for observing her students and knowing what they need most.

{Running Record}



Prologue

One summer day in Frog Creek, Pennsylvania, a mysterious tree house appeared in the woods.

Eight-year-old Jack and his seven-year-old sister, Annie, climbed into the tree house. They found that it was filled with books.

Jack and Annie soon discovered that the tree house was magic. It could take them to the places in the books. All they had to do was point to a picture and wish to go there.

Along the way, Jack and Annie discovered

1

that the tree house belongs ^{from} to Morgan le Fay. Morgan is a magical librarian from the time of King Arthur. She travels through time and space, gathering books.

Jack and spell. In t riddles

-16, Jack t stories

-20, Jack d gifts to ell. They ip to the

Titanic and a gift from the Lakota Indians. Now they are about to set out in search of the third gift...

2

1

How Far Away?

Jack and Annie walked past the Frog Creek woods on their way home from the library.

"I miss Teddy," said Annie.

"Me, too," said Jack.

"He's a really smart dog," said Annie.

"Yeah," said Jack, "and brave."

"And wise," said Annie.

"And funny," said Jack.

"And here!" said Annie.

"What?" said Jack.

3

Student: Nasir "Nathan"

9/23/13
11:04 am

Running Record Key

- * — omits word
- * ^ inserts word
- * ○ mis-pronunciates
- * ✓ self corrects
- * □ teacher assists
- // long pause
- \ short pause

* significant

Reading Passage:
Magic Tree House #19
Tigers at Twilight
by Mary Pope Osborne
reading level: 2.5

Comprehension Questions

1. What is this passage about? ✓
2. What time of year was it? X
3. What did Jack & Annie find in the woods? ✓
4. What was the tree house filled with? ✓
5. How was the tree house magic? ✓
6. What did Annie & Jack have to do to get to the places in the books? ✓
7. Who does the tree house belong to? ✓
8. Who is Morgan le Fay? ✓
9. What does "discovered" mean? ✓
10. What does "mysterious" mean? X

Reading Score: Total Miscues 15
Significant Miscues 10
Questions Missed 2

Total Words in Passage: 108
of Significant Miscues: 10

$$\frac{10}{108}$$

39

Running Record Reflection
September 23
11:04- 11:30 AM

For Nathan's running record, I chose to select a passage from the Magic Tree House series by Mary Pope Osborne. I have heard him talk about how much he enjoys reading these books, so I decided he would probably feel more comfortable reading a type of authentic literature that he is familiar with. I selected the first 108 words from the Prologue of *Tigers at Twilight* for him to read. I pulled him out into the hallway to work with me during the last segment of our literacy block. I reminded Nathan that he was helping me with my homework by reading with me. I have noticed that any time he thinks he is helping me, he is so happy. I looked up this particular book on scholastic's website and found that the reading level is 2.5. Although Nathan is in fourth grade, this book is a fair match for his reading ability. While reading, he paused several times, but read with greater fluency than usual. I was surprised though that out of the 108 words he read, he had 15 miscues, with 10 being significant. I decided that the mispronunciation people's names did not need to be counted as significant miscues. I also did not count self-correction or pauses as miscues. As my key describes in the attached page, the significant miscues I counted include: when the reader omits a word, inserts a word, mispronounces a word, or the teacher assists in the identification of a word.

Although Nathan had a pretty high number of miscues during his reading, I was impressed with how well he answered the comprehension questions. His response to the question, "What is this passage about?" was detailed and covered every section of the reading! In fact, before I even had the chance to ask him some of the more pointed

questions, he had already answered them in his overview of the reading. I feel that this shows me that comprehension may not be the root of Nathan's difficulty in reading. From my observations and interactions, it seems that Nathan could have a limited vocabulary or exposure to more difficult words. He had a hard time explaining the meaning of the words "discovered" and "mysterious." He also seems to have some trouble decoding words. He sometimes mixes up letter sounds. For example, in the text, he pronounced the word "filled" as "foiled" and the name "Annie" as "Anna." I am not sure, however, if these were simply careless errors. My goal while working with Nathan is to ultimately discover what the root of his reading struggle is.

In discussing this running record with Ms. Lawson, she was intrigued at how well Nathan was able to comprehend the text. We both previously assumed that because he was having such a difficult time reading fluently, taking many pauses and mispronouncing words, that he was struggling to comprehend as well. Both of us are somewhat puzzled by this. Ms. Lawson does think that Nathan has not had near the exposure to sight words or vocabulary that he needs. She decided to send home some work sheets dealing with sight word practice with intention that his current tutor (that works with him twice a week) will guide him through the vocabulary and sight word practice.

{Sight Word Assessment}

Sight Word List:

2 nd grade-	3 rd grade-	4 th grade-
grow	cabin	metal
storm	important	energy
caught	captain	interesting
above	church	favorite
piece	valley	action
friend	deer	belt
across	inch	describe
bridge	block	colony
bright	born	national
listen	potato	court

Sight Word Assessment Reflection

October 4

10:35- 10:55 AM

For the first assessment of my choice, I decided to do sight word recognition. I created thirty flash cards for Nathan including ten words each from a second, third, and fourth grade list (found on <http://tarpey.cusd.com/documents/2ndSightWords.pdf> , <http://tarpey.cusd.com/documents/3rdSightWords.pdf> , and <http://tarpey.cusd.com/documents/4thSightWords.pdf>).

I included words from the lower grades as well as fourth grade, because he currently reads between a second and third grade level. I pulled Nathan out in the hallway, and I reminded him I needed his help to complete my college homework. I told him I had a list of words that I wanted him to say. I told him I was setting a timer for two minutes, and I wanted him to get through as many as he could within that time frame. Overall, he knew nineteen out of thirty words. Out of the ones he got right, five were fourth grade words, eight were third grade words, and six were second grade words. Out of the ones that were incorrect, five were fourth grade words, two were third grade, and four were second grade words.

It is interesting to me that Nathan knows words such as: interesting, favorite, caught, and piece, but struggles with words such as: potato, listen, energy, and storm.

Each day I get to work with him, I am constantly looking to find a consistent pattern of something he struggles with; however his struggles are inconsistent and mysterious. I wonder if his lack of sight word recognition is simply caused by limited vocabulary in his home environment. Maybe the sight words he does know *are* used at home on a regular basis, therefore he is aware of their meaning and is able to recognize them more naturally. I am also wondering about Nathan's decoding abilities. If he is unable to decode words in fourth grade, this will only become more of a deficit in regards to his literacy ability. For my next assessment, I may try something to test Nathan's fluency or comprehension in order to narrow down his needs.

In discussing this assessment with Ms. Lawson, she was glad I worked on sight words with Nathan. She said, "If we can figure out a way to enrich Nathan's vocabulary 'bank,' this will not only help him with word recognition and comprehension, but also in his writing." She suggested that he needs consistent help with sight word practice, spelling words, and vocabulary. "Even if we just work on three or four words a day, I think his reading fluency will improve" she said.

NOTE: In order to access websites, highlight the link and copy/paste it into your web browser.

{Fluency Assessment}

Passages:

Basketball on Wheels

10 Basketball is a hard sport to play. You need strength
21 to move up and down the court. You need to bounce
34 the ball as you go. You must be ready for a pass. You
43 cannot rest for a second. People who play basketball
55 work as a team. The same is true for people who play
58 basketball from wheelchairs.
66 There are many basketball teams for children in
74 wheelchairs. These children bounce the ball, pass, and
84 shoot from their wheelchairs. They learn to move fast in
95 their chairs, and keep track of the ball. They must also
106 be good at passing and shooting. They need a lot of
116 strength and balance to play. Just think how high the
123 basket looks when you are sitting down.
132 Wheelchair basketball is a great way for children in
143 wheelchairs to be on a team. These players show us we
can all be strong if we try. 150

1. What is the article mostly about?
2. What can we learn from children who play wheelchair basketball?

Resource:

<http://www.meade.k12.sd.us/Curriculum/3rd%20Grade%20Fluency%20Passages/3rd%20Fluency%20Passage%205.jpg>

The Big Game

It was Friday. The football game was Saturday and we were very excited. My brother was going to be the quarterback for our team. It was the first time he would be in that position. He had been hoping to be quarterback ever since he joined the team. He said, "That's the big job. That's the one that makes the big difference."

My mother said, "Be careful, son. That's the big target, too. You know the other players want to sack you. You can get hurt."

"Don't worry; I'm tough and I'm fast. Plus, I have great players who will block them."

That night I couldn't sleep well. I worried about my brother. My mother was right. He could get hurt.

The next morning, he left early to get to the game. When we got there, it was about to start. The team ran out on the field. He looked great. He saw us and waved. Then it started. They were playing hard. One player in particular from the other team kept rushing at him. Then it happened. He knocked my brother down. My brother was slow to get up. My mother was screaming. The coach ran out on the field. He told my brother to take some time on the bench. He was afraid he had been hurt.

My mother ran down to check on my brother. But all he did was smile. "It's just a bruise. I'm fine. And don't worry, I'll be back. This is great. I love leading the team."

My mother was so worried then, but my brother was right. He plays quarterback every Saturday. She can't go to the games. She just waits at home and hopes to see him walking in smiling.

Resource: <http://teacher.depaul.edu/Documents/TheBigGamefictionGrade3.pdf>

NOTE: In order to access website, highlight the link and copy/paste it into your web browser.

Fluency Assessment Reflection

October 13

10:26- 11:05 AM

I decided to try a fluency assessment with Nathan this week. I pulled him out in the hallway and sat at a table with him. The hallway environment was mostly quiet despite the few stray students or teachers that were a bit distracting for Nathan at times. I selected four different third grade passages with different topics associated with them. I chose third grade, because this is closer to his reading level, yet still is a little bit of a challenge for him. I asked Nathan to choose two of them that he would be most interested in reading. He chose "The Big Game" and "Basketball on Wheels." For each passage, I told him I was going to set my timer for one minute, and I wanted him to read at his normal pace until the timer went off. The passage titled, "The Big Game" was about football, and I intentionally chose this because I knew that Nathan plays football. This passage contained 314 total words and, he was able to read 56 words correctly in one minute, mispronouncing one word total. The passage titled, "Basketball on Wheels" contained 150 total words and Nathan was able to read 45 words in one minute,

mispronouncing two words. I average these “WPM” scores together and found that Nathan reads approximately 50.5 words per minute. At the typical fourth grade level, students should be reading about 105 words per minute toward the beginning of the year. This would mean that Nathan is not quite to the half way mark in comparison to where he needs to be.

It is surprising to me to think that Nathan is only reading at a fluency level that is half of what he should be. It is frustrating, because I simply cannot figure out the root of his struggle. I do know, however, that his hesitations and lack of confidence definitely played a big role in his fluency. For the words that were tripping him up, I decided to make a vocabulary list. I want to start doing this every time I read with Nathan with the intent of going over the words he had trouble pronouncing and discussing their meanings. Although his fluency is not as strong as it needs to be, his comprehension level is still surprisingly high. When reading the basketball passage, he asked me several questions about children in wheelchairs playing sports, so I decided to pull up pictures of the Paralympics and even showed him a short video clip of a Paralympic basketball game. He was very intrigued and talked about it all day.

In talking with Ms. Lawson about this assessment, she is also a little bit confused about the root of Nathan’s fluency struggles. The only thing that she can conclude from this is still that his mind bank of vocabulary words is limited and therefore words trip him up easily. She feels that he simply needs more exposure to vocabulary words and for someone one on one to explain the words, sound them out with him, and encourage him to incorporate new words he learns into his writing in hopes that this will help him to better remember them when they come up in a piece of literature.

{Comprehension Assessment}

Comprehension Questions included in Assessment:

1. Why was it supposed to be the best summer? N
2. Why did the narrator dislike Jeremy Ross at the beginning of the book? Y
3. Where did the narrator hang up his enemy list? Y
4. What was his dad's advice for dealing with enemies? Y
5. What do you think is the secret to enemy pie? Why does it work? N
6. What did the narrator have to do in order for enemy pie to work? Y
7. What did Jeremy Ross do when the narrator rode his bike to his house? Y
8. What happened when the narrator spent time with Jeremy Ross? Y
9. What did the dad make for dinner? Y
10. Did the pie get rid of the narrator's enemy? N

Key: Y=yes (correct) N=no (incorrect)

Comprehension Assessment Reflection

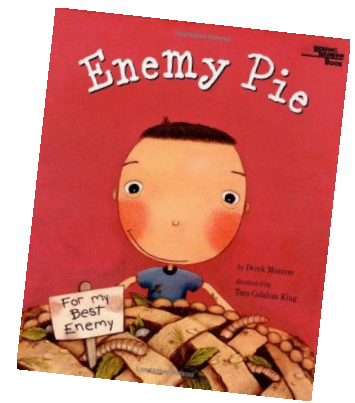
October 21

10:40-11:14 AM

The last assessment of choice I decided to do with Nathan was checking solely for comprehension. I found a great website called Storyline Online which includes videos of famous actors and actresses reading award winning books (<http://www.storylineonline.net/enemy-pie/>).

I chose the third grade level book, *Enemy Pie* by Derek Munson for Nathan to listen to. Instead of requiring Nathan to read any material, I simply wanted him to listen to a story in its entirety and gauge what he was able to comprehend by asking him some questions at the close of the reading. I took Nathan into the teacher work room where it was quiet so that we could listen to the reading away from distractions.

During the reading, it was hard for me to tell what Nathan was thinking about the book, because his expression did not change. Regardless of his facial expressions however, he was able to answer seven out of the ten comprehension questions correctly. The questions with the more concrete answers did not seem to be a problem, although I did have to elaborate on most of the questions in order to clarify what it was asking. This could have been an error on my part though, because a few of them seemed to be written



in a confusing way. Overall, Nathan did not seem to have much trouble recalling information from the story or restating events in the book. This once again confirms that his reading struggle is not rooted in comprehending the information. Instead, I feel that his vocabulary and his confidence need to be strengthened in order to help him become a more fluent reader.

In discussing these results with Ms. Lawson she too finds it interesting that Nathan's comprehension level seems high, but his vocabulary knowledge and fluency is rather low. She thinks that he was probably able to make more sense of vocabulary words he didn't know in this assessment, because the story was being read to him. The reader was fluent and able to encourage proper context due to her inflections and expression while reading, therefore it probably inferred correct meaning. Ms. Lawson still feels that Nathan's greatest need is simply to keep practicing and to gain a wider knowledge of age appropriate vocabulary in order for him to become a fluent reader.

NOTE: In order to access website, highlight the link and copy/paste it into your web browser.