Rachel Webber

Dr. Spicer

Adolescent Literature

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Final- How to Introduce a Text

In this theoretical scenario, I will be teaching an eighth-grade English/Language Arts class. In this section of the curriculum, we will be doing a full unit fixated on reading the novel *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. There can be a lot of elements that go into beginning a text for children. It is important to ensure that students have a solid understanding of the genre, different pieces of figurative language that might be woven into the narrative, complex vocabulary words, and themes to possibly be on the lookout for while reading. I also have a few creative and engaging activities to sprinkle in as well before reading to immerse the students into the feel of the setting and novel in general. Roughly, I would like to spend the majority of the first week of this unit to focus on preparing students for the novel, realistically 2-3 days. Below is an outline of the sequence in which I would introduce different elements mentioned above.

Day 1 of *The Giver* unit-

Focus: Genre

* Deliver the plot synopsis on the back of the book. Ask for students to guess what fiction they believe this may fall under. After brief conversation and hearing multiple perspectives, explain how this falls under fiction- specifically young adult fiction and dystopian fiction.
* Deep dive into what is fiction? This should definitely be review for eighth graders- talk about what makes a story fiction. Examples of fictional books we have read will be asked for as well. This will be casual whole-group discussion, with notes being taken in our ELA notebooks as we discuss elements of fiction.
* PowerPoint presentation on dystopian fiction. As we go through, students will be given out a note organizer to fill out along with the presentation to encourage active listening. Elements of dystopian fiction will be discussed and then we will talk about different books, shows, or movies we know of that may fall under this genre.
* Mini lesson on a short story that falls under dystopian fiction. After reading together as a class, students will get into groups of three (they choose) to identify the elements of the story that would prove it to fall under dystopian fiction. (Possibly have stations of different short stories in this way and rotate so students read various stories, repetition will help them memorize the key factors).

Day 2:

Focus: Figurative language and theme review and silly rules

* Before anything, I will announce new rules to the class. These rules will be the same as the ones the community must follow in the novel but will be adapted to make sense in the classroom. An example will be that if a student has a question, everyone must be quiet and listen intently. After the student receives an answer, everyone in unison must say, “Thank you for your curiosity.” If anyone, including me, mess anything up or hurt anyone’s feelings, a public apology must be spoken to which all will reply “We accept your apology, (student’s name). These are just a few examples. I will not give them context just to see their strange reactions.
* We will go through figurative language briefly again, which should be a review and all of the information they would need should already be in their notes. We will briefly go through each of the main figurative language devices that we will need to keep in mind for the book.
* We will do a kahoot to review figurative language and generally have some fun.
* We will refresh on the concept of what a theme is- specifically theme vs. main idea. We will go through our notes for this before likely playing another review game of some sort.

Day 3:

Focus: Assignments activity and rules continued

* To begin to give students an idea of a key part of the novel, we will have a fun activity to give them a first-person perspective on what members of the community go through.
* I will explain that we will have a council of elders, or the essential leaders, of our little classroom community. This council will consist of the top two students from each Kahoot game we did the day before (in total five council members). We will be deciding who does what for the rest of the day in assigning them a role. They do not get to trade with others, rather, they can ask the council to rethink their decision. If they are not satisfied and are not given a different role, they can choose to leave our community.
* The council will conspire to sort every student quickly (there will only be a handful of roles for the purpose of time). Each “role” will be given a different assignment- whether it is a figurative language review, a vocabulary review, or so on, they will have to work on this for the remainder of class (students can work with others who have received the same assignment).
* If someone is “removed” from the classroom community, their work will be a compilation of every area and they cannot work with anyone.
* These assignments will not be graded, just practice. At the end of class, we will have a conversation about how everyone felt during this activity. How did those who were removed feel? This will begin some questioning and skepticism of the society written about in the novel.
* Students will make predictions as a form of exit slip.
* Tomorrow, we begin chapter 1.