

Exemplar Lesson Plan Summary 2017-2018

Ramon E. Betances Early Reading Lab Grade 3 Team Kimberly Chan

Poems for Science: Animals and Habitats Leslie Johnson Integration Program

Third grade has a large unit focused around frogs and their adaptations. We selected Poems for science because we wanted to connect and apply their learnings to creative writing. They mainly focus on informational writing but we wanted to integrate poetry as a way to present information. Additionally, we wanted to provide additional experience with writing figurative language.

Students engaged in two poem writing activities. The first poem was written about the rainforest habitat. This directly related to their learning of the rainforest where their frogs of study live. Leslie used gradual release of responsibility to engage students. Model stories and poems were shared and acted out by the class. She then walked them through and practiced creating lines about sounds. Using pictures, she provided students applied her instruction to writing lines that they think they would hear. The following day, she again used the gradual release of responsibility to engage students in writing a new type of writing. Students again saw models, practiced and then, using pictures from her, wrote their own poems about the animals. All students engaged in this writing process, even students who are less motivated to engage in writing tasks. Prior to this lesson, students had spent weeks reading various texts about different types of frogs from the rainforest (poison dart frog, amazon horned frog, glass frog). Students learned about these frogs through instruction of reading strategies and skills, learning about their adaptations and how they survive. In this last part of the curriculum, students have selected a frog of their choice to research and become an expert on. With this ELA curriculum, we have also paired with our science unit on animal adaptations. Students' understanding of behavioral and physical adaptations were developed as well.

A discussion was had with students that in Hartford Performs they would be learning about how to write poems about the rainforest and animals and that they would be writing their own poems about their chosen frog.

All instructional activities were provided and implemented by Leslie, the Arts Provider. However, during her instruction I support my students who need adult support with facilitating ideas and writing. These particular students I also shortened the length of their writing/poems.

Students will use Leslie's introduced model of how to write a "Who am I" poem to create a poem about their frog of study. Students will also create an individual "Sounds of the rainforest". Both of these writing pieces will be shared with and performed to parents during a family curriculum event planned.

The third graders absolutely LOVED this experience. The hands on involvement using instruments to engage with and perform poems was a hit. When students saw her enter the classroom they would all cheer with enjoyment. Students said things like "ELA is going to be the best today" and "Can you come back again soon?" They were very disappointed on the last day to not be able to work with her again.

The connection to our curriculum was a perfect match. Everything she did was perfectly aligned to what we have done in the classroom. When I do this program again I have two things that I would do differently. My first thought is instead of having her come at the end of the curriculum module, as a culminating activity, maybe begin with her program as a way to build students' background knowledge

about the creative writing process. Then engage independently again with the poems about their frog of choice. My other idea was to link this experience more with our science unit so students can research any animal and their adaptations, then create the poems about that particular animal. This way it would yield more varied types of poems.