Title: Two Bad Ants

Subject Matter Emphasis and Level: Language Arts – Grade 3

Author: Jamie Sanders

School District: Wagner Community School

Email: jamie.sanders@k12.sd.us

Brief Description of the Lesson/Unit:

Students will read the selection Two Bad Ants by Chris Van Allsburg. They will examine realism and fantasy as well as author’s purpose and character point of view. Students will be choosing to work either in pairs or individually on a task designed to show knowledge of the skills learned as well as promote creativity and higher level thinking.

SD Content Standards:

Reading
3.R.1.2 Students are able to use comprehension strategies to read and understand unfamiliar words, phrases, and passages.
3.R.4.1 Students are able to gather information to research a topic.
3.R.3.1 Students are able to respond to ideas and attitudes expressed in literature by making personal connections.

Writing
3.W.1.1 Students are able to use strategies to write narrative and descriptive pieces.
3.W.2.1 Students are able to revise writing to improve clarity of description and action.
Stage 1: Identify Desired Results

1. What enduring understandings are desired?

The selection Two Bad Ants takes readers into an adventure that two scout ants have when they are separated from their group in a modern day kitchen. What seems like a wonderful new world turns into a scary experience for the ants that find out what it is like to be left behind in a bowl of sugar, stirred into a cup of coffee, toasted in a toaster, and whisked away in a “waterfall”.

Third graders explore many genres throughout the year. With prior knowledge of the genres of fantasy and realistic fiction the students will dissect the story into what is indeed fantasy (ex. talking ants) and what is realistic (ex. kitchen appliances). Using prior knowledge and experiences of being in their own kitchen will aid students in this task.

Next students will examine the point of view of the characters in the story. Example: A student sees a brick wall; an ant sees a towering mountain. A student sees the water running in a faucet; an ant sees a hazardous waterfall.

2. What essential questions will guide this unit and focus teaching/learning?

What are the characteristics of a fantasy story?
What are the characteristics of a realistic fiction story?
What do you think was the author’s purpose for writing the story?
How is an ant’s home different than yours?
What adventures might ants have in your kitchen?

3. What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this unit?

Students will identify differences between genres, look at their environment in a new way, and describe the point of view of characters in a story.

4. What prior learning, interests, misconceptions, and conceptual difficulties might be brought to this unit?

Prior learning of genres as well as comparing and contrasting must be present. Some students may find it hard to understand the ant’s point of view before doing some research.
Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence

1. What evidence will show that students understand?

Performance Tasks:
- Venn Diagram- fantasy and realistic fiction
- Journal writing before the story (predictions)
- Journal writing after the story (reactions)
- Determine author’s purpose
- Projects and presentation

Projects
1. Students may create a comic strip depicting a new ant adventure in a kitchen. By using descriptive words they will show the ants feelings and views of the gadgets and appliances.

2. Students may present various teacher approved kitchen utensils and gadgets and describe how they may appear to an ant.

3. Students may compare and contrast an ant’s home to their home. Nonfiction books of various levels would be provided for the students to research ant homes.

All work samples will lead to a discussion group: How might my project have helped us understand the anxiety of the ants in the story?

Other Evidence:
Quizzes, Tests, Prompts, Work Samples (summarized):
- Brain storming web
- Discussion group
- Self selected project
- Journal of the students’ thoughts before and after reading the story
- Quiz- main events of the story, author’s purpose

Unprompted Evidence: (observations, dialogues, etc.)
- Compare and contrast fantasy and realistic fiction- Venn Diagram
- Discussion group
- Conference with individual students about project progress
Meeting of students who selected the same projects to discuss successes and difficulties

**Student Self-Assessment**

- Peer presentation- mixed groups
- Rubric
- Reading their beginning journal entry (checking predictions)

### Stage 3: Plan Learning Experiences and Instruction

1. **What sequence of teaching and learning experiences will equip students to develop and demonstrate the desired understandings?**

   **Major Learning Activities:**
   
   1. Exploring fantasy and realistic fiction within one story
   2. Determining author’s purpose
   3. Examining character’s point of view
   4. Looking at their environment in a new way

   **Materials & Resources (technology & print):**
   
   Two Bad Ants by Chris Van Allsburg  
   Various reference books about ants for research purposes  
   Kitchen gadgets

   **Management:**
   
   Introduction and reading of the selection will be done in a whole group setting. Students will work individually on selected projects. Short conferences will be held daily to track students understanding and progress. Students will share projects in mixed groups at the completion of the experience.

   **Support Services and Special Teacher Notes:**

   **Extensions and Adaptation:**
Struggling readers will receive books of appropriate reading level for research, as well as a version of the story on tape for repeated reading.

Students may utilize the computer for type written projects.

Students may carry over the skills learned in this lesson to other stories to examine character point of view as well as author’s purpose and fantasy vs. realistic fiction.

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**Stage 4: Plan Differentiation**

2. **What differentiated instruction strategies are being used in this lesson/unit?**

**Differentiated Process:**

- Journal writing
- Brainstorming web
- Class discussion
- Self selected project
- Conferences with students
- Peer conferences/discussions and presentations
- Rubrics

**Differentiated Content:**

- Story on tape
- Various leveled nonfiction readers

**Differentiated Product:**

- Journal entries
- Brainstorming web
- Projects
- Rubrics
- Presentations