Formative Assessment in Action

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The Writing Workshop

Sequence and Transitions

Transitions — useful for maintaining a logical sequence for a biography.

They include:

- During the early years of his/her life...
- When ___ was a child...
- As he/she grew older...
- When he/she was ___ years old...
- After his/her work as a ___...
- As an adult...
- Later on in his/her life...
- In the future he/she hopes to...

Biography Sequence

- Birth place
- Birth date
- Hardship
- Family
- Memories

Beginning Middle End

1st 2nd 3rd

Accomplishments

Facts about their life

Beliefs
Classroom Culture for Formative Assessment
Learning Environment

- Classroom set up for small groups, large groups, and individual work

- Supports the teacher to work individually with students and with small groups
Management Systems

- Accessible materials
- Resources to support writing
- Students as resources for each other
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goals</th>
<th>Success Criteria</th>
<th>Formative Assessment Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions</td>
<td>I can choose a person whom I would like to learn more about to write a biography</td>
<td>Teacher-student dialogue Student-student dialogue</td>
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<td>I can create interview questions and collect information</td>
<td>Teacher-student dialogue Student-student dialogue</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I can organize my information in a beginning, middle, and end sequence</td>
<td>Observation Teacher-student dialogue Student-student dialogue Whole class discussion</td>
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<td>I can use transitional expressions when writing my paragraphs</td>
<td>Observation Teacher-student dialogue Student-student dialogue Whole class discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I can write a concluding paragraph to end my biography</td>
<td>Observation Teacher-student dialogue Student-student dialogue Whole class discussion</td>
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Informing Instruction

• **Sequence and Transitions** mini-lesson

• Sentences were basic and repetitive

• Writing lacked complexity and flow
Mini-Lesson

Genre: Expository Writing – Biography

• *Learning Goal*: Provide details and transitional expressions that link one paragraph to another in a clear line of thought.

• *Mini-lesson*: Sequence and Transitions. Students are presented with a list of transition phrases that are common and useful for maintaining a logical sequence for a biography.
Mini-Lesson

“In the early years of his/her life...”
“When ______ was a child...”
“When he/she was ______ years old...”
“Later in his/her life...”
“As he/she grew older...”

Providing the sentence structure is especially helpful for ELLs
Gathering Evidence: Conferences

- Offer feedback on their writing and individualized instruction
- Provides an opportunity to affirm what students are doing well
- Obtain evidence to inform mini-lessons or small group strategy lessons
Questions Asked During the Teacher-Student Dialogue

• “What are you working on?”
• “How’s it going?”
• “How is that working out for you?” (Regarding the application of a writing technique or strategy)
• “What have we learned so far that can help you as a writer?”
Student Agency
Table and Peer Conferences

- Students conference with one another and share helpful feedback
Responsive Instruction

- Whole class lesson on developing complex sentence structures
- Small group pull out lesson on complex clause connectors
- Small group pull out lesson to revisit transitional phrases
What Did I/Do I Need?

- TIME
- COLLABORATION
- CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Above all, implementing formative assessment is a learning process that I have been constantly refining throughout the years.
Final Thoughts

• Helps me to create an individualized plan for every student in my class
• Tool for me as a teacher-researcher to observe and analyze student progress toward reaching the learning goal
• Plan instructional responses
• Immediate feedback to students on how they can improve