Teacher Commentary – Level 11 Sample Lesson, Day 2, Amy Sanderson, Centerville Elementary School

*Joanne Durham, Interviewer (I); Amy Sanderson, Teacher (T)*

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| **Segment** | **Transcript** |
| Running Record Teaching Point (2:59) | I: So what did you notice and how did you come to decide on what you actually did for the teaching point?  T: There were lots of things that I noticed. He definitely does work. He knows how to check the visual information. He is going back to try to pull it together, to reread and think about his story. Those are all things that we want our children to do when they’re reading. The places I went back to on the first page when he found “some,” when he got to that in reading, he found it really quickly. That’s what we want them to do, find that part that you know, some, they wanted some, he said, oh, something. So I praised finding that big part fast, and then checking the last part, making it make sense and look right. I praised him for the good work he did here, and then over on page 20, I went back and it kind of surprised me, I said, “Something on this page tricked you, it made sense but it didn’t quite look right,” and he knew right where the error was – firehouse – he knows house and he knows home, he’s seen it in lots of books, so I thought, he found the first part, but you still have to check the last part, to check the visual information and making sure it goes with the story and makes sense. So were the two parts I went for. You’re seeing these big words and they’re thinking, this might be tricky, but this is something easy that you can do just because it’s a big word, or you have to take a good look, the big words or the little words, they all can be tricky. So I was trying to pull that together where he did the good work and show him how to do it on that part. For the most part, I was very pleased with this running record. He had lots of self-corrections, rereading, and checking that visual information.  I: When you’re looking for a teaching point in a running record you obviously can’t do everything, so you chose what you thought was most significant. Are there other things that you learned from this that you will keep in mind as you work with him?  T: Well, let’s see. Firm up some of these words that look alike, like went for woke, and where for went. He self-corrected in both of those places, but they look alike, so maybe some of those – wanted was a troublesome area. So I’ll think about that when we’re reading, maybe mask some of those words that look alike. When you’re doing familiar reading, what is this one, this one, this one – and maybe they’re all w words, like want, and went, and with, will. Building that up a little bit more maybe would help him go faster on those parts and help with the looking. |
| Choosing and Initiating Writing  (1:43) | I: So the next part of your lesson was around the writing. You chose to have them create their own sentences off the book, so talk about why you chose to do the writing the way you did it.  T: At the beginning of the year we did more writing where we all wrote the same thing, even on a big sheet of paper, more like interactive writing, and we were all writing and talking about ways words work, with the boxing and the clapping or words that you know. Now I’m still trying to do the same type of thing but to get them to come up with their own story, have a conversation with their neighbors, which was slow at times with some of them, but have a conversation about what they want to put down on paper to show that what they say can be put on paper, that can be your story. They are all working at different rates and we are using their own oral language, how they want to say their story. They can extend their stories if they need to, or a child might just put a little bit down for him, so everyone can work at his own pace.  I: And you began that with your own oral language, you modeled  T: I said, let me tell you about some things that I like to do. That will get them started, they wanted to raise their hands and tell you about this, so it does get them talking when you tell them something about you. That conversation, I listen, then they talk and I listen, or they listen to each other when they did the turning and talking and telling about something they like to do, linking it to the Little Bears book. |
| Supporting Student Writing (3:33) | I: So then in having them write their own stories, you’re working to reinforce a lot of the things you want them to be able to do in both reading and writing. So maybe looking at some of the children’s work, talk about what you noticed they were doing and how you prompted to support them.  T: One thing I really noticed today that surprised me was that the children were very fast in getting things down, which is good, you want them to be fast. By the time I got around to the last child when we were going through what they were going to say, she already had the first two words down, she didn’t wait on me, which is good. She’s showing independence, which is what we want, what the goal of this writing is, to get them to be independent in their writing, in the classroom, when they’re by themselves writing their own stories without the teacher as their guide.  T: Some things I’m trying to do with word work, you’re still doing the same things that you did at the beginning. There are certain words that you have to know, for example, (close up of fishtank writing and then puppy) this child loves to write about her puppy, she can write that one, that’s one you know, so that’s building her writing vocabulary for things that are important to her. And that’s another good reason that everyone is writing their own stories. This is something that she is going to need to write about when she’s sitting at her desk without her teacher, she needs to know this one. Or when she wanted to play chase – she knew the ch, well, she put the sh, those are still tricky for children even at this time of the year. What can I do to help myself? Saying it slowly to hear my sounds, or puppy, I told her to clap pup-py, and once we clapped she knew. So I’m trying to teach them strategies on how words work. Some you have to say slowly, some you can hear the parts; some you just have to know like “his.” We’re teaching them the things they need to know to be a good, independent writer. I didn’t have any analogies, I don’t think – well, somebody did have oo like zoo in his balloon, he liked to throw water balloons. When they hear my language hopefully they can internalize it and hear it when they’re sitting by themselves.  I: And did you say that somebody made their own boxes?  T: She did – she took her own boxes for tank – she had written tank in there and the thing that surprised me was that she even had the right number of boxes for it. That let’s me know that she knows, hey, this is one I can say slowly, even though it wasn’t quite right, she took the initiative and she knew that she had to do something about the tricky part. They all went over to the practice page on their own, which is another good thing. That’s a good place to try things – how does it look, how does it sound, it gives them so they won’t have to use the eraser and that fear. It gives them a safe place to practice.  I: So then this is clearly reinforcing the same things they can do in reading, right?  T: Yes, it’s the same thing they can do in reading – this is one I can say slowly, this is one I can see the big parts, or I can find something that I know, or, oh, that’s a word wall word. Yes, it’s trying to connect the two. |
| Revisiting Student Writing  (4:07) | I: So then at the end of the writing, you had them share it and you talked a little bit about the concepts of print.  T: Right, they are getting all these things down fast and they’ve got good spacing and their stories make sense and we’re talking about how to solve, strategies for words. But there are still other things they need t know. They need the concept of this is one letter, show me two letters, make sure they understand this is a word, this is two words, the capital letter. These are all things that we’re expecting first graders to know, so that’s something that we have to practice. You can see from my group that about half were sure of themselves and the other two weren’t quite so sure. That let’s me know that this is something to keep touching up on. This is something that they need to know. I noticed when I said show me two words, one of them put 3 in his window, and it was because of his spacing. That kind of shows that’s why you need the spacing, because it helps your eyes. It all goes hand in hand.  I: And you reviewed also with them, what were the things that you need in your writing  T: The capital letter, the spacing, the ending mark.  I: It seems like that also makes them more independent, because they know these are the things they need to look for.  T: It looks like in a book, their spacing looks nice. They all started with “I” so they know to make that one capital, but they seem to get that which is good.  I: So you were thinking about some ways you might extend this.  T: They were very fast in getting things done, and that’s a good thing when they’re excited and eager and ready to go. But I noticed that they all started with I, I like, I went, I love. They are reading at a level 11, so at this point in the year, your reading and writing need to kind of match. So I would think of taking maybe even showing how books start their stories, and everything doesn’t begin with I. So let’s see how to do that with our story. So like, I like to play chase with my puppy, I could probably say, so when do you like to play chase with your puppy? Maybe the next day when we do our writing. She might say, “on the weekends,” or “on Monday” or “after school.” So we could think about some ways to make our stories sound more like a book. “I like to throw water balloons on the porch” – well, a good way for him to start could be, “on my porch, I like to throw water balloons.” So showing them different ways to start their stories to make them match the reading.  I: And it helps them when they come to some of those clauses too that they’re not thrown that the book doesn’t start the same way all the time.  T: Right. They have seen the books that start, “On Monday,” like the ten little bears – “one little bear”. So that’s something that I think might do the next time that we write and vary the types of sentences and how we start.  I: And it seems to me that because you’re starting with that lesson from what they’ve already done, you’ve got them interested in it and hooked and it’s a nice way to teach them.  T: Especially when I say that we’re going to make it sound like the way a second grader would write. |