Mini- Project #1

Teresa Seely

Student: *Brooklyn\* (Pseudonym)*

Age: 5 years old

Grade: Kindergarten

Brooklyn entered my classroom about four weeks ago from New York City. She had never been to kindergarten and had not attended any type of formal preschool program. She knew her basic letters and sounds, but was extremely lacking in her phonemic awareness abilities. My goal was to increase her confidence in regards to phonemic awareness strategies.

Lesson Plan-

Objective: To develop a better understanding of phoneme segmentation and blending to increase phonemic awareness.

Materials: A set of photo cards with no words printed on them.

Procedure: Play an oral guessing game with a small group where high student involvement is necessary. The teacher will pick a photo card and will give hints such as “I am thinking of a food that you eat for dinner and is /p/ /i/ /z/ /z/ /a/”. The children raise their hands to guess the answer. The correct student gets to pick a photo card to tell about and so on.

Rationale: According to our Best Practices in Literacy Instruction textbook, games such as the one described above give students an opportunity not only to hear sound blending and segmenting in a small group setting, but provides a safe environment for them to practice this critical area of phonemic awareness. The book indicates that this strategy of blending and segmenting words is not an easy skill for many children and t4eachers must provide opportunities for students to practice.

I believe that this small group technique helped to achieve my goal for Brooklyn because she was able to be actively engaged with a handful of her classmates while they segmented and blended words. This small group phonemic awareness activity would benefit all of my students because it automatically provides a safe learning environment where they would be more willing to take a chance in their ability to answer a question. Brooklyn definitely responded positively to our small group picture game activity and soon after we began to play, she opened up and started guessing the answers. It was a little challenging for her to segment words on her own, but she could certainly guess the correct answers when hearing the sounds from her partners.

Mini- Project #2

Teresa Seely

Student: *Brooklyn\* (Pseudonym)*

Age: 5 years old

Grade: Kindergarten

Due to the fact that Brooklyn has a lot of catch up growth to make because of her lack of formal education, I decided to continue working with her for all three mini-projects. For this mini-project, I wanted to focus on the Making Words activities described in our Best Practices in Literacy Instruction book. During the Making Words lessons, I hope that Brooklyn will learn grade level word building strategies and will be able to apply them when she is writing and reading new words. My main focus will be on consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words for the purpose of this mini-project.

Lesson Plan-

Objective: To use the “Making Words” spelling approach to help the student increase knowledge of letter sounds, sound manipulation, word sorts and word building strategies in order to build a foundation for reading and writing success.

Materials: Word builder card and individual letter cards (Harcourt Reading Series)

Procedure: In small group setting, the teacher will give each student a word builder card holder and the following letters: a, o, t, p, c, h, m. The teacher will have the students build words using their letters while she models on a larger word building board. Build the following words in order: cat, pat, mat, hat, hot, pot, cot, cat, cap, map. Sound out each new word and discuss how changing the letter makes an entirely different word. Talk about rhyming words that were built and word patterns.

Rationale: Brooklyn was having a hard time with the building words portion of our Harcourt Reading Series and the weekly phonics lessons. She was lacking the ability to transfer her basic knowledge of phonics and manipulate the letters to make a word on her white board. According Chapter 8 in our Best Practices in Literacy Instruction book, making words provides great opportunities for students to manipulate sounds in a hands-on learning environment. Once children begin to manipulate letters to make words, they begin to see how by simply changing one letter, you create a completely different word.

I have seen great improvement in Brooklyn’s ability to spell words since beginning the Making Words activities on a regular basis in a small group setting. The other students have increased their ability to write new words as well because of this word building activity. They seem to be sounding out words more independently because they have confidence with sounds.

Mini-Project #3

Teresa Seely

Student: *Brooklyn\* (Pseudonym)*

Age: 5 years old

Grade: Kindergarten

With Brooklyn, I was really challenged to find ways to differentiate reading instruction to meet her high needs while reading unfamiliar text within our weekly Harcourt decodable book. Although her mom does a wonderful job practicing the book once it is sent home, my biggest challenge was carving out time to work with her on an individual basis to teach her 6 months worth of kindergarten reading skills that her classmates have already been taught.

Lesson Plan-

Objective: To differentiate reading instruction and improve fluency in reading kindergarten level decodable books with fluency and accuracy.

Materials: Weekly decodable books and previous decodable books according to ability, white board and marker.

Procedure: In a one-on-one setting, the teacher will work with the student to teach basic reading and decoding strategies to increase reading level to be on track with kindergarten reading standards according to district guidelines. The teacher will use the white board and marker to review unfamiliar words and sight words. With guidance, the student will decode the new words and review sight words before reading the book. Together, they will do a picture walk where the teacher will draw upon prior knowledge about the topic. The student will read the book while the teacher provides guidance and offers new strategies for decoding text. The teacher will also read from the text to model reading strategies.

Rationale: Using the “To, With & By” teaching approach, the student will be able to see modeled reading and will be able to apply new reading strategies in a safe learning environment. Because the student is working individually with the teacher, they will be able to take chances as they are learning to decode words and read more fluently. Modeled reading instruction by the teacher also provides a framework of good reading strategies for the student to emulate as they attempt to improve fluency and accuracy.

Brooklyn still struggles to decode unfamiliar words, but has greatly improved on her ability to identify the sight words from our word wall that are included in the decodable book series. Her mom is doing a great job reinforcing reading skills at home and I expect that she will be on track for first grade reading if her mom continues to practice reading strategies each day during the summer as well. Brooklyn is making progress decoding, but is not confident in front of her peers yet and that is something I believe our individual lessons will help her with as the year progresses. I have seen gains, but will continue to provide direct reading instruction on a regular basis to increase her fluency and accuracy.