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Lesson 3
Exploring Problem Solving
Develop prompts similar to DMA as a group project
Idaho standards --Most

Lead into this activity by giving practice DMA questions weekly for two months.

Intro—Read a question from past DMA prompt—Discuss what the prompt is asking. Let students work in a group of 3 or 4 to decide various ways to answer the question correctly.

Come together as a large group and discuss the most reasonable solutions. Analyze the differences of various prompts using the overhead.

Explain the importance of the DMA and tell them that they are needed to develop a prompt using the basic skills of add, subtract, multiply, divide, and a fraction question.

Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 and pass out the group guidelines. Go over rules and expectations. Give them the scoring rubric. Each student must have his/her own copy of the group's questions even though they are developing them as a group. Students are given 6 class periods to complete the activity.

Make copies of the various prompts and exchange with groups to solve. Discuss as a large group how the prompts are written, stressing clarity and use of operations. Give one class period for the students to solve together and make suggestions to improve the questions. The next day have the students score the tests that were taken from their group.

As a whole group discuss the importance of writing clear, meaningful questions, and not making them too involved. Have students rewrite their questions making any changes that will make the questions easier to read.

Have students score each other on the amount of work the other people in their group has done.

LIMSST Project Literacy Lesson Reflection Form

115

Date of Lesson: Nov. 10-18

Lesson Title/Topic Areas:

Exploring Problem Solving by Developing prompts similar to DMTA

Literacy Strategies Used:

Lesson 3

(Please discuss what literacy strategies you embedded in this lesson. What were your goals in using these strategies?)

They needed to analyze the skills of add, subtract, multiply, and divide by doing practice tests. Then they worked together in groups of 3 or 4 to come up with a real life situation and write a 4 part prompt clearly enough for others to understand. My goal was to make the ~~work~~ easier for them.

Student Response to the Lesson:

(Was the strategy effective? Were students able to read/write as needed in this lesson? What attitudes were displayed? How did specific students and/or the class do? How did the literacy strategy aid in developing student understanding of the topic? Cite specific evidence from the samples of student work)

The strategy was effective because not only did they become more familiar with the DMTA and the structure of the test, but they enjoyed coming up with the different questions, sharing them with classmates, and trying to solve other classmates' questions. They also enjoyed telling their classmates what they had done wrong and giving them suggestions to make their prompts more understandable. Writing the questions themselves helped them to understand and enjoy the process.

Lesson Reflection:

(What worked well with this lesson? What challenges did you encounter in this lesson? Would you change certain aspects of the lesson or the questions that you asked? How does this influence future lesson planning?)

The students enjoyed doing a group project different from the usual daily routine. There were a couple of boys that did not want to work with their groups, but they ended up writing prompts on their own that were actually pretty good. I think that it depends on the make up of a class and their personalities. The way that this lesson is taught differently for the three classes that I had this year. The advanced class had greater expectations than the regular class and the basic class was watered down some.

Relationship to Previous Instruction:

(Have you taught this lesson/topic prior to the LIMSST project? If so, how did your teaching of this lesson differ from what you taught before? How did students' reactions to this lesson differ?)

I had done a much weaker version before and did not focus on analyzing and discussing the make-up of the practice tests before they wrote their prompts. They did not discuss as small and large groups how it helped them and they did not do any writing in their journals. This year the students enjoyed the activity much more and took more ownership of the prompts.