Lesson Plan

Mystery Book Talk

Teacher: Kathleen Wylonis Grade Level 5 & 6

Content and Standards:
Content Standards:
AASL 4.1.3 Respond to literature and creative expressions of ideas in various formats and genres
AASL 4.1.4 Seek information for personal learning in a variety of formats and genres.
CC.5.R.L.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.
CC.6.R.L.9 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

ELA Standard:
Standard 2: English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of language arts.

I. Prerequisites: The students must be able to read at or near the targeted level and make decisions between a selection of titles.

II. Instructional Objective: The objective of this lesson is to introduce and excite students about the mystery genre, and specific books within that genre, so they can make a selection for their independent reading mystery genre assignment.
III. Instructional Procedures: BDA

Before: Collect a wide variety of mystery titles and display them around the instructional area. Once the students are gathered, explain that you will be introducing them to some mystery titles, and that a great thing about mysteries is that they come in a wide-variety, from realistic to science-fiction to crime mysteries.

During: Display the prepared PowerPoint on the screen (Appendix A). Present the following titles for each specified group, giving them a good description of the title and showing the slide and book trailer if available.

Grade 5, Reading Below Grade Level:

Howard Wallace, P.I. by Casey Lyall

Space Case and Spaced Out by Stuart Gibbs

Isabel Feeney, Star Reporter by Beth Fantaskey

The Misadventures of Edgar & Allan Poe by Gordon McAlpine

Grade 5, Reading Above Grade Level:

Brightwood by Tania Unsworth

Chasing Vermeer and other titles by Blue Balliett

A Guide to the Other Side: A Beyond Baylor Novel by Robert Imfeld

Grade 6, Reading Below Grade Level:

Somebody on this Bus is Going to be Famous by J.B. Cheaney

Sting and Loot by Jude Watson

The Most Frightening Story Ever Told by Philip Kerr

Grade 6, Reading Above Grade Level:

Eye of Midnight by Andrew Brumbach
If You Find This by Matthew Baker

The Underdogs by Sara Hammel

After going through the specific titles, show the additional themed slides, including Suspenseful Series, Animal Mysteries, Mysteries Around the Globe, Award-Winning Mysteries, Mysteries by Favorite Authors, and Crime Mysteries. Highlight specific titles and themes on each of the slides.

After: Assist the students as they browse the books so they can make a choice that meets their interest and reading level. Check the books about to the students.

IV. Materials and Equipment:

Mystery Books that are include in slides, plus others for browsing

A computer with PowerPoint and internet access

A projector and screen

V. Assessment/Evaluation: Assessment will simply be if the student makes a choice and checks out a book for their independent reading project.

VI. Accommodations or Modifications needed for students with disabilities or ESOL: Books will be chosen and support will be given to each individual student to make a book selection that meets their abilities.

VII. Technology:

A computer with PowerPoint

A projector and screen

Internet access for streaming videos
VIII. Self-Assessment:

This lesson will be considered a success if all of the students choose a book for their mystery IRP. Additionally, this lesson will be considered successful if 90% of the books that were specifically highlighted are checked out.

Reflection:

These book talks went well as a whole, but the two fifth grade classes that are below reading level were the most challenging. While each group was very small, at about 6 students, they were much less interested in reading. One student in particular was only interested in finding the shortest book possible. None of these students chose The Misadventures of Edgar and Allan Poe, however, this did lead our most resistant student to choosing a graphic novel of Edgar Allan Poe’s The Pit and the Pendulum. I would reconsider including this series in the future, or adjust how I presented it, as none of the students were interested in checking it out. I ended up presenting Isabel Feeney, Star Reporter to the above grade level fifth grade class, where it was enthusiastically welcomed and checked out. In the future, I will focus on making sure, not just that the books are at the right level and high interest for the below grade level readers, but I will also ensure that there are some short books that aren’t visually intimidating.

The above grade level fifth grade class was highly engaged in the book talk. With over 20 students, they checked out all of the titles that I featured. Every student left with a book. The same was true for the above grade level sixth grade class. The below grade level sixth grade class was about ten students. They were interested in the book talk. Two boys were actually bickering over who got to check out Somebody on this Bus is Going to be Famous. There were two students who proved very challenging to find a book that they would agree to try. One student was on the search for a very short book, while the other looked at a number of books, but was
just having a hard time deciding. Almost every student in this class checked out a book. However, there were a couple of students with an abundance of overdue books that were unable to check out a book until they returned some of their books. While it is important that the students learn responsibility, given this was for an assignment, and some of these students are not supported well at home, I would consider checking out a book for an assignment to these students.

From a timing perspective, I think I could have added one more title to each presentation and the students would have still had plenty of time to find and check out books. Additionally, for those extra titles, I would be sure to include books that have book trailers as these are particularly engaging for the students.