

Various Elaboration Techniques

Denise, Second Grade

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Alright friends, yesterday you guys were doing some awesome writing. I was working with some at my table and I was amazed at the things you are already adding in to your informational books. So today I want to teach you how writers, they don’t just put one line on a page and say that page is finished. They add details or they elaborate using different strategies. Let me give you an example. You remember the book we’ve read, ‘Wolves?’”

Whole-class speaking:

“Yes”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“In ‘Wolves’, you remember this first page when we read it says, ‘What’s that sound? Howl. There’s a lonely howl in the distance. Then more voices join in. The chorus of howls send a shiver down your spine. What’s that spooky sound? It’s wolves’. That’s their introduction to their book. When I read this, you remember it’s written kind of like a narrative. It tells a story right? It’s not fact after fact after fact. It’s more of a narrative text and there’s something that the author does to get readers hooked into reading. Look at that first line he went ‘Howl.’ He used a sound that he knew people knew and would be interested in reading more. It kind of hooked the reader into it to read his book. I want you to pull out this piece. This is just a copy from the book ‘Wolves’ because I wanted you to have your own text in front of you. So I want you to look at this page and we’re going to read this page because we’ve had it in reading when we were reading earlier. Now were going to use it in writing. I want you to reread it with me.”

Teacher and students read text aloud as a class:

“Wolves and dogs. Wolves are the largest members of the dog family. Foxes, coyotes, jackals, wild dogs and domestic dogs are also members of this family. Our pet dogs are relatives of the grey wolf. That’s why they look alike.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Now we have to read over here. I know it’s like a diagram with labels so we still have to read it too”.

Teacher and students read text aloud as a class:

“Wolf, red fox, coyote, jackal, wild dog, domestic dog.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Then we have a photograph over here. There’s two.”

Teacher and students read text aloud as a class:

“The German Shepard and the Timber Wolf.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Then you have a word bite.”

Teacher and students read text aloud as a class:

‘Domestic, tame and kept by humans’.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Now flip over to the back side. This is the rest of that chapter.”

Teacher and students read text aloud as a class:

“But wolves and dogs are different in several ways. Wolves have a longer snout, stronger jaws, and larger teeth. Dogs have a rounded head, shorter legs. The biggest difference is that dogs like to be around people and wolves would rather be around other wolves.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“And then we have two more photographs over here. The top one is a wolf and it has longer snout, stronger jaws, and larger teeth. Then you have dog - rounded head, shorter legs. The wolf and golden retriever are cousins. You have a questions and answer. What did the wolf said to his friend?”

Teacher and students read text aloud as a class:

“Howl is it going?”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Yeah. It’s like when they howl. Alright, here’s my question. I want you to look at this page because the author did something really amazing on this page. The author added details and elaboration on this page and I want us to figure out how the author did it to see if we can emulate that in our writing. Ok? So look at what it says here that ‘Wolves and dogs are different in several ways. Wolves have a longer snout, stronger jaws, and longer teeth. Dogs have a rounded head and shorter legs’. I want you to turn to your partner and see if you can come up with what the author did to elaborate there.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“What do you think he did there?”

[Student speaking inaudible, explaining author’s elaboration strategy]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Add more. When he said ‘The biggest difference is dogs would like to be around people and wolves would like to be around other wolves’ what did the author do? What did he try?”

[Student speaking inaudible]

“He told you the difference. So he told you how wolves and dogs are different. So, That is one way that the author used to elaborate on what doing he was writing about wolves and dogs but he wanted to add more in. So he decided he would say, ‘oh, this is one way they’re different’. A wolf likes this and a dog likes this. Do you see that?”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Friends, you’re back with me in three, friends you’re back with me in two, friends you’re back with me in one, and you’re back with me in zero. I was working with Kito and Jason and they came up with the neatest thing for this last paragraph where it said “The biggest difference is dogs would like to be around people and wolves would like to be around other wolves’. I was like ‘So why did he put that in there?’. We were talking about it and we came up with the idea that he was comparing wolves and dogs. He said on this hand, wolves like this and on this hand, dogs like this. He was showing how wolves and dogs were different from each other. And then I noticed Nadija, her and Cadence did the coolest thing. When I looked, they were like “Look at how their different”. They were using that picture to look and see how are they different? How are they alike? So this is another way that an author can add details or elaborate on their page is that they can show pictures. Look at this one here that we looked at earlier. How did the author elaborate using that? How did the author elaborate using that, Nathan?”

Student speaking:

“Wolves would rather stay around with other wolves instead of people.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Yes. They would, wouldn’t they? How did the author show that through that picture? What do you think Malaki?”

Student speaking:

“He shared the wolf’s family.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“He did, didn’t he? On this one he shows the relatives of the wolf. So you get an idea of all the different relatives of the wolf. Now today as you go off to write I want you to think about what this author did in their writing. And see if you can try some of that in your book. You’re working on your non-fiction book, your informational book where you’re teaching somebody about something. I want you to see if you can try some elaboration today and try some of the different things we talked about like narrative writing in the beginning to get the reader hooked, comparing with the words, and also comparing and contrasting with the pictures because those are important things too. Thumbs up if you think you could try some of that in your writing today. Excellent.”