

Using Question Words to Add Text

Denise, Second Grade

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Ok, writers, last night I took all your writing home, I sat on my couch and I just read and read and read. And I thought ‘Oh my gosh, you guys are so awesome, you guys are wonderful writers’. So I thought today what I might teach you was that - how writers can use other writers’ work to help them in their work. So when I was looking last night I was looking for a special piece, a piece that when I read it that I was like, ‘Oh wow, this has everything I need’. So I found one and this morning I asked permission from this person to borrow it and I made it larger so we could look at it this morning. This piece came out of a piece of writing that was all about dogs. Ok, so it says ‘Are dogs mammals?: Chapter 2’. So, first of all, that writer put the chapter number and they have a title right? So as a reader I know that when I read this down here, what am I going to be reading about?”

Whole-class speaking:

“Dogs”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“I’m going to be reading about dogs and mammals, right? It’s going to have something to do with dogs and mammals. So let’s go down here and look. ‘Dogs are mammals because their babies are not born in an egg and they drink milk’. Then they have a fun fact. ‘Birds are not mammals because they are in an egg and they eat worms not drink milk’. So I started thinking about that. And I thought about how remember we talked about in reading how there are question words and that makes our reading where we can understand it if we have those question words like when I’m asking a question, I can find the answer right there. So, I thought about those questions word ‘why’ and I thought about her text. And I thought, ‘did she tell me why dogs are mammals?’. Did she tell me that? Look through your text. ‘Dogs are mammals because their babies are not born in an egg and they drink milk’. So did she tell me why they’re mammals? Turn and talk to your partner.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Look, she says dogs are mammals because their babies are not born in an egg and they drink milk, so does that tell us why they’re mammals?”

Student speaking:

“Yes”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“It does, doesn’t? It tells us they are mammals because their babies are not born in an egg and they drink milk.”

[Student speaking inaudible]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“We’ll have to see.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Alright, you’re back with me in three, you’re back with me in two, you’re back with me in one, and you’re back with me in zero. I was talking to Tobias and Kate and we came up with ‘why’ and I said, ‘does this tell me why dogs are mammals?’ and it does right here. ‘Dogs are mammals because their babies are not born in an egg’. So that tells me why right there. I have a ‘why’. Then I thought about the other question word we have: ‘when’. ‘Dogs are mammals because their babies are not born in an egg and they drink milk’. But does that tell me when?”

Whole-class shakes head “no”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“It really doesn’t tell me ‘when’, does it? So, as a writer I have an idea I can add something about this to my text. I can come up with a question and I can add the information to my text. Does it tell me who? Does it tell me who? Who is it?”

Whole-class speaking:

“Dogs”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Dogs. So It answers my ‘who’ question? Does it answer my ‘what’? That’s a good one. Turn and talk about that one. Does it answer my what?”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Does it answer the what?”

Student speaking:

“Yes”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Does it? How?”

[Student speaking inaudible, discussing how dogs are mammals]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Because it tells dogs are mammals so that tell us what about a dog? It does, doesn’t it? It tells us exactly what about a dog.”

[Student speaking inaudible, discussing how dogs are mammals]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Well, we’ll worry about that later.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Alright friends, you’re back with me in three, you’re back with me in two, you’re back with me in one, and you’re back with me in zero. Friends, I was talking to Jason and Kara and we said, ‘you know what, it does tell me what’. It tells me dogs are mammals. So that’s telling me what a dog is so it I answered my question ‘what’. The other one is ‘where’. Does this tell me where?”

Whole-class speaking:

“No”.

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“No, it doesn’t tell me where, but guess what? I could put this up here. Now as I writer, I know there are two things to add to my writing: ‘when’ and ‘where’. And I could add something about that to my writing. Now there’s something else this writer did: a fun fact. Look at that fun fact. ‘Birds are not mammals because they are in an egg and eat worms not drink milk’. So tell me how is this part, this part different from this part? Turn and talk to your partner.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“How is that fun fact different?”

Student speaking:

“Because birds lay eggs and dogs don’t”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“So the fun fact is about what?”

Student speaking:

“Mammals”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“It’s about birds right? It’s talking about birds. But the top part is about what?”

Student speaking:

“Dogs”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“So, it’s like comparing what?”

Student speaking:

“Comparing dogs and birds”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Yeah, it’s telling how their different, so you made a comparison didn’t you?”

[Student speaking inaudible, discussing what birds eat]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Right. They eat what?”

Student speaking:

“Worms.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Worms. So, she’s using that as a way to tell you the difference between them”.

Teacher speaking to individual student and whole class:

“Alright, you’re back with me in three, you’re back with me in two, you’re back with me in one, and in zero. Malaki, can you tell us what she did here?”

Student speaking:

“She compared birds and dogs.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“She was comparing birds down here and dogs up here. So, she was telling how they are different. She says birds are different because they are born in an egg, they hatch from an egg, and they eat worms they don’t drink milk. So, that’s how they’re different. Now I want you to open up your writing. Find a chapter that you want to work on. Alright, I want you to look at your chapter I want you to think about these question words first. Could I answer a question using each of these words on your chapter? Let’s try ‘why’. Read your chapter and see if we can answer a question about ‘why’. Just like we do in reading, see if you can answer a question about ‘why’? Go.”

[Student speaking inaudible]

“She remembered, she remembered, because you remembered how we said you can tell to cross your fingers.”

Student speaking:

“Eagles have great eyesight.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“So eagles have great eye sight, what else?”

Student speaking:

“Eagles can spot small animals from way up in the sky.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Very good. What else?”

[Student speaking inaudible, discussing eagle's eyesight]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Alright let me ask you this, do you see the question word ‘where’? Could we answer - like if I said ‘where are eagles’ eyes?’ could you answer it? How would you answer that?”

Student speaking:

“Where are eagles’ eyes? Eagles’ eggs are right near their beak, it’s up above their beak.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“What about ‘what does an eagle use their eyes for?’.”

Student speaking:

“Eagles use their eyes to hunt.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Writers turn and face me please.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Could you be my partner for a minute to help me teach them?”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Alright, Dakota’s going to be my partner. Dakota is writing a piece about eagles. He’s talking about different eagles in his piece. He’s on the page about their eye sight. Could you cross your fingers like you did for us?”

Student speaking:

“Eagles have great eyesight. Eagles have great eyesight because they can see up in the high sky.”

Teacher speaking to student:

“What was your third thing, do you remember?”

Student speaking:

“Eagles use their eyesight to hunt.”

Teacher speaking to individual student and whole class:

“So, he got that far. And I said ‘well let’s talk about the question words’. I said, we took the word ‘where’ and I said ‘where are eagles’ eyes?’.

Student speaking:

“Maybe on the side of their head?”

Teacher speaking to individual student and whole class:

“Well, he had an answer, so his answer was?”

Student speaking:

“Eagles have eyes right above their beak.”

Teacher speaking to individual student and whole class:

“Now his job is to write that in that chapter. Then I said ‘what do eagles use their eyes for?’.”

Student speaking:

“What eagles use their eyes for is to hunt.”

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“I said you can write it. You can write it. Do you see how you can ask your partners questions with words and it pushes them to add more to their writing? Real quick, I’m going to give you a couple more seconds, try it out with your partner.”

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Let’s try it with Camille. Ok, go, Camille.”

[Student speaking inaudible, discussing facts about flowers]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Why?”

[Student speaking inaudible, discussing facts about flowers]

Teacher speaking to pair of students:

“Write it. See how we did that? Ok. So go on.”

[Student speaking inaudible, discussing facts about flowers]

Teacher speaking to whole class:

“Alright writers, you’re back with me in three, you’re back with me in two, you’re back with me in one, you’re back with me in zero. Writers, you did some fantastic work with your partner today. I’m noticing you have a lot more to add to your work today. Because of those questions, now you kind of have an idea of what you can add to your writing. So you’re going to go off today and you’re going to use these words to help push yourself to add more to your page because writers don’t just have one line on a page, they have lots of lines.”