

## Teacher Commentary Transcript

*J = Joanne Durham, Literacy Consultant; P = Philippa Haynes, New Prospect Elementary School, Inman, SC*

P: And then I wanted to move onto helping them understand that sometimes you can have a lot of information about a topic, but just because you have all of these resources that all of them are going to be beneficial to you. So I wanted to drive home that point that sometimes you have to pick and choose which resources are going to give you the most information and maybe make it easier for you to understand.

J: And I think also for the learning to use a resource, it seems like you wanted them to really dig into it, and you referred to that often, even when you told them to look carefully at your chart and read it carefully and absorb it all. If you have too many resources,

P: It's overwhelming

J: It will be too superficial; they'll be running from one to another and not necessarily digging in.

P: And I think that really helps with second graders, you have to tell them, this is what your brain should be doing at this moment. So I tried to model that a lot, I'm looking at it, reading it over, and telling my brain, I'm looking for what's the same. 17:06 You have to help them realize – otherwise they'll look at it, my teacher told me to look at it and that's what I'm doing, and I don't get it

P: I think modeling that process helped my students so that when it was their time to do it, they were asking themselves those same questions.

P: I think today was one of the first days they had that aha moment where they thought I really do need to look at more than one resource when I'm saying I'm researching about a topic. If we hadn't done that comparing and contrasting I don't even think they would have given that a second thought, especially the group that realized that one resource said there were 1000 tornadoes a year and the second resource said 1500. All of a sudden they were like, I'm confused, and I said, that means you're thinking about what you're reading and you're actually realizing, hey, I don't know enough about this or how could I get more reliable information. And then there was a conversation about well maybe that book estimated and maybe this book actually counted. You could see it was just evolving just from something as simple as taking a fact from one resource and from another resource

J: So then it makes that whole skill much deeper, too, than if it were just about the information; it's all about how you really think.

J: Do you think they're getting a deeper sense of the text features and how they really work?

P: The pictures, the diagrams, and the maps that were shown, my kids really honed into that. I think they really saw the value of that today. Many of them were talking about how the diagram of the tornado and how it spun really helped them see how it would be such a disaster if it came through an area of land and what it would be capable of doing. 10:18 Even when we talked about my example with the tsunami they kept saying this one is so much better because you can actually see the waves getting bigger and bigger

J: So they're not only understanding that the text features exist, and you can learn from them, but even evaluating them and realizing this one is helping me because of this, and this one isn't quite so useful.

P: And forming opinions about them, this is why this one is more beneficial to me than this one. Just because these say the same thing doesn't mean they are both providing me the same insightful information I want to get.

J: I think today's lessons – there were a lot of ways I was thinking they really showed how much a research, ongoing research can help kids not only to learn the information you want them to learn

about the topic, but also to learn how to read for information, how to do those reading skills and strategies. So maybe we can talk about that first part, where they were comparing and contrasting. How did you see that as different from if you had just chosen an article, or given them one lesson on comparing and contrasting that wasn't in the context of this ongoing inquiry.

P: I think that if I had just pulled a random article, they wouldn't really see value in it, and they wouldn't see that I'm supposed to apply this skill, that this is a skill that can really help me when I'm researching. So by having them compare and contrast information that they had researched previously and that they were already aware of, I think it really made them think about what the information was saying. It kind of brought up especially once they noticed actually when I read my first resource, it said something completely contradictory to what my second resource said, that's when those thick questions started coming up that we had talked about in the previous lesson. I could hear them today going, "That's a thick question that you're asking". I think they start actually applying that knowledge, that skill that they've learned, and not just do this in isolation and say that I have it but I really don't understand how to apply it to a real world inquiry project that I'm working on.

J: Well it's one of the real benefits of doing it like this, right? You're giving them time to really develop – I think in the second lesson they learned what you meant by those kinds of questions and how your thinking goes when you're asking them –

P: But they weren't applying it yet

J: And now they are, because they were really interested in the topic and they knew enough to ask some really good questions.

P: I think they're finally understanding what that means and why it's beneficial to have those type of questions, and why it's not just something you can easily answer right then and there. I think they're realizing it's interesting, and it's almost entertaining to have conversations like that, and you're not quite sure what the answer is. I think they're finally seeing the value in that.

J: When they were asking each other questions about the information they had learned, they were really digging into interesting territory.

P: It was almost like they were trying to quiz them on are you really an expert, could you really answer every question I have for you.

J: And I loved some of the responses the kids made, where they said, we haven't learned that yet.

P: They felt much more comfortable with that. I'm not sure they would have been as confident day 1 of this unit as they are now that we've finished up all 5 lessons for this unit so far.

J: They're building – they're becoming experts, where at first they felt, I don't know much about this.

P: A little timid; not sure.

J: Did you think that their understanding of the things was deeper because they've been researching over a couple of days?

P: Yes, I think they had a much bigger picture of it, and they were actually able to separate a little more from what they thought they knew and what was actually factual and I can prove it because I got it from this resource. I thought that was really interesting because sometimes children of this age have this misconception that they think they know something because they've experienced it this way, when in fact, when they do a little research they find out it's quite the opposite. So I thought that was really interesting to note and as the lessons progressed, I noticed that happening more and more.

J: Like the one child, it was good she brought up the background knowledge of the flood in the bathroom, but then when you asked her more about how it was alike or different, I think she had gotten enough information about floods that she was really able to think about how that was different.

P: When they talked about would you let a flood dry out or get someone to clean it up, she was one of the first ones to say, no you just let that dry out because it's bigger. She must have had a lot of people in that house trying to get the water out, so it was interesting how she made those connections and

almost corrected herself.

J: So they begin to understand when their background knowledge is relevant and when it's a contrast to what's going on.

J: You mentioned to me some thoughts about using the e-books or the things on the I-pads vs. the books. What were some of the ideas you had about that as it developed?

P: Well, living in a technology driven world, I really wanted to incorporate that. As you probably saw, my students were very quick to pick up an e-book or an I-pad that had an article. That was their go-to. But my goal with them is for them to understand that technology is wonderful, but it also has drawbacks. I didn't even share with them that the first day we had downloaded a new app on all the I-pads, and I had to go into all the I-pads and re-plug in the log-in and the passwords, and it was time consuming. I didn't share that with them, but with teachers, that's the kind of thing you have to keep in mind. I know a lot of schools have wireless routers, but if there's too many people using the same router, it can shut the system down and it stops. So it's really beneficial to make sure that you still include the books and articles. I found for some of my students who are struggling more with reading, they actually picked up a book first. I think for them it was interesting to notice, when they look at the screen it can be distracting from the glare, and sometimes just looking at the print in the book is beneficial. So it was interesting to see those students who wanted to grab a book first instead of an I-pad. Doing a unit like this made me really see the importance of still including the books and articles for students who may be more comfortable looking at a paper book than on a screen.