Guided Reading Sample Lesson Level 5, Day 1 – Teacher Commentary

Grade 1, Amy Sanderson, Centerville Elementary School, Anderson School District 5

**Teacher Commentary** *(J= Joanne Durham, Interviewer; A=Amy Sanderson, Lesson Teacher)*

| **Segment** | **Transcript** |
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| Book Sequencing (3:45) | A: OK, I was just going to talk a little bit about how we started from level 4 and moving on into level 5 and what my thought process was as to how we got from one level to the next. I like to sequence my books, and think about things for a week. This is my starting point and this is my ending point, and how am I going to get the children to that point, to be able to move from a 4 to a 5, or a 5 to a 6, or whatever levels you’re thinking about working with your groups. So as an example, I’m going to start with *Shark in a Sack*. This is an easy level 4, and it’s about a little boy who asks his mom all these silly questions about what can you put – “Can you put a shark in a sack?....” And this is a great way to start off that cross-checking piece, where they’re having to think about their story and take a look. It could be pot. It could be pan. And that’s how I set that up. I give them choices when I’m giving my book introduction, and planting those things in their head to free them up so they can take a good look to check. Well, could it be a chicken or a hen or a rooster? That frees them up so they can do the looking piece, because you have to remember these are 5, 6, 7 year olds.  And then moving on to My Home, it’s also a 4. “My home is here, said the bird, My home is here, said the frog.” It’s also repetitive and they’re having to think about their story and take a look. And this one is real similar, “I can run, said the spider.” There’s all kinds of things the spider could be doing. He could be running, he could be crawling. “I can fly, said the butterfly. I can’t fly, said the snail.” So you’re having to think and take a look. So you set them up along the way and you have to gradually release, giving them those choices, to get to the part where they’re taking on some of that. And you’re looking for those things in your running records, or when you are listening to the first read of the new book. It could be “I can jump.” He’s got wings, so it could be “I could fly.” So you’re looking for – are they taking a look? Sometimes you’ll hear them read, “I can fff- jump” so you know they’re starting that, and you set them up along the way, up to *Father Bear Goes Fishing* and then it was *Tom is Brave*.  Back to *Father Bear Goes Fishing,* when you’re introducing a book like this, you have to think back to *Shark in a Sack*. This is a little more repetitive, “Can you put, can you put.” It repeats itself on the pages, where in *Father Bear Goes Fishing*, this is a book with a little more meaning. It’s got conversation. “Where are the fish, said Father Bear. Where are the fish?” It’s definitely got more text on the page and you’ve got that return sweep. Actually, when I turned to this page when we were doing this book last week, one little girl turned to me and said, “I can’t read all that.” I said, “Oh, sure you can.” It’s just a big difference from where you started at the beginning of the week and where you’re headed.  So I think sequencing your books is a great way to go. Don’t just go one day and pull one thing, and one day pull something else. You have to have a plan and keep in mind the path that’s your road map. |
| Introduction to the Lesson (1:27) | J: So thank you so much for your lesson, and can you give us just a little background about the group, and where they started, and how long you’ve been working with them.  A: I’ve been working with them since about the end of September. There are 4 children in the group right now and two of them are repeaters. One of them is on the Reading Recovery waiting list, and I have a new one who just came. This is their second week. So it’s a flexible grouping.  J: These are first graders, and what level?  A: First graders, and they’ve been on Level 4 and the new book today is a Level 5. They started around a zero, so we started from the beginning. (14:55)  J: So what was the focus of your lesson? How did you decide what the focus would be?  A: Well, the focus of my lesson, I am trying to get them to understand and to hear that language, that you have to be thinking about your story, holding onto that meaning while checking the visual information. You know, these are first graders, they want it to say what they want it to say, not how the book says it, so that’s just one of those things that’s a good place to start with in first grade. |
| Running Record and Teaching Point (2:11) | J: So you did take a running record for one child during familiar reading. First, tell us why do you do the familiar reading, and take a running record?  A: Well with familiar reading they kind of got a little off track. I looked around and they weren’t going like they usually do. There are several books in that basket and it really gives them books that we’ve kind of taken the bugs out and they can feel confident on and read, and get that fluency going, and practice strategies if they need to on their own while I’m taking a running record on a different child to see if my teaching has been paying off. My running record also guides me on what I’ll be teaching coming up, or if they’re ready to move up to a different level. So there are lots of reasons why we do a running record. (16:13)    J: And what did you learn from the running record today?  A: It was an easy book for her. There were a couple of times I could hear her say – she wanted it to say something and she didn’t even get it all the way out of her mouth and she fixed it like the book says it – I can “ss – “ she wanted to say “said” but she fixed it to however the book said it. It was an easy running record for her but it also gave me an opportunity to use my teaching points to practice some of those competencies on how words work and how you’ve got to be thinking about your story to give her some practice in the book that was easy for her.  J: So what did you take her back to?  A: I took her back to “slide” at the end – “I can slide” – I went back and said, “Oh, I like how you were thinking about your story and making it look right.” And we did a slow check and that language of “did you see the letters that you are saying?”, and also going through and getting it started with two letters, like the gr for grasshopper, the sn for snail, we could have done the sp for spider. Those are things they are going to have to be looking for moving into level 5s and higher, it’s not just letter by letter. Words work different ways. |
| Word Work (0:29) | J: And then that led into your word work, right?  A: I moved into the word work to warm everybody up, where you have to look at the first part and then keep checking. So all the words looked alike and then they had to check with their finger, is that a word, does it make sense. It’s more in isolation but that’s what you have to do at the tricky part in a book.  J: And always you were taking them back to – this is what you’ll do when you read.  A: This is how you do it, yes. |
| Decisions about the Book Introduction (1:38) | J: So then the new book. Talk about how you chose the new book and why you did the things you did in your book introduction.  A: I chose a Level 5 book called *Tom is Brave.* During your book introduction, you just really want to focus in on this is what the book is about. You give them the gist of the story, and give them the meaning, so they can hold onto that as they are searching and thinking about their story and taking a good look. So you just want one or two things in the book – I think I took “went” as a new and important word and tried to connect it to something on their word wall. This is why they are up there because they help us when we read and when we write. I tried to do that and there were some structure places, like “look where you’re going” – that’s not how we normally talk. And “here you are, said Mom” – I tried to free up some of that to give them more of the opportunity to look at where she says “I am bleeding” – that would give them a good place to work. I left things too for them to work. I gave them some structure but left places for them to work as well. Shop/store – I gave them choices, so OK, this is something I need to pay attention to, let me see how the book says it.  J: And those places you left them to work are also connected to what you had done in your word work –  A: Yes, like “cried” – the “cr” and “bleeding”. They have to be thinking about their story and they knew from the book introduction that Tom had gotten hurt so let’s read to see what happened to Tom.  J: So you set them up to be able to do it again. |
| Teacher Support during Reading of the New Book (1:19) | J: So while they are reading, how do you encourage them to use the strategies you have been teaching?  A: Well, when they’re reading, I’m just using that language that I use over and over, because you want it to be in their heads as they are reading: “are you thinking about your story?”. Ask them “are you right?” when they’re right and ask them “Are you right?” when they’re not right to get them to check and to get them to be thinking while they’re going. When you do that slow check, do you see the letters you are saying? Instead of just looking up at you, you want them to have that strategy or to know what to do to check and see for themselves if they are right. They won’t always be sitting right beside me every time, so you’re trying to get them to be independent readers.  J: And did you see them doing that? Did you see places where –  A: Well, sometimes I will prompt them, even when they were right, to run that finger under – and even in the book introduction, one child said, “Oh, they’re bleeding” – she’d yell out what’s happening, but that’s a good thing to check, because a lot of times they’re not quite right. She knew when she got there that that’s a good place to go back and say “Were you right when you were thinking about that? Check it to see if it looks right.” I was very proud of how they handled the book. |
| Teaching Point  (2:10) | J: So then you chose some things for teaching points with the new book. Can you talk about that?  A: We went back to – it could be shop, it could be store – because I did hear different things as we were reading, so that was something I could say – it could be either one, let’s go back and see which one it says and do that slow check. Also, I noticed when we got to “into” – those are some other things that are going to be coming up. It’s still the first part and the last part. It can show them different ways word work. We clapped “into” and did it make sense, find the parts.  J: So for the first one when they read you heard kids saying different things?  A: I heard somebody say “shop” and somebody say “store” so that’s why I chose that, because it could be either one so let’s go back and check.  J: and with “into” – did anyone say anything with that, or you just wanted them to notice it?  A: I saw one of them hesitate. He stopped and he looked. And I thought that’s probably something he hasn’t come in contact with in our levels 1-4 as much, or maybe we just haven’t focused on it, so maybe these are things that are going to be coming up, like “today” and “inside” and “away”. You have to be thinking about how your books are going to be coming as you move up in levels.  J: So the opportunity where the child is actually starting to deal with that, you picked up on.  A: Right.  J: What kind of things did you jot down about what they were doing?  A: It was mainly my teaching points. I noticed the shop and store, into, blooding for bleeding, things like that. That’s another way of thinking, how would a book say it? You might say “I’m blooding,” kids say those kinds of things, but you have to start thinking about how a book would say it. So those are some of the little notes that I made as we were going through the book and then I went back to two of those places. |
| Reflections on the Lesson | J: Did anything puzzle you or surprise you about what the kids did?  A: Well, other than the little girl falling out of her seat, she’s kind of new – Some of them are not as verbal as the other children, so I want to really make sure I’m listening to them and can hear them, and that I’m focusing on everybody. The new little girl – another reason I chose a book like this, last week she turned to the last page in a book and she said, “Oh, I can’t read that.” She didn’t even try. And I said, you know, with these kinds of books where there’s not just one line of text on one side and a picture on the other side. It’s more of a conversation and you’ve got your return sweep and I was real happy that she handled it very well when she got to that part. She didn’t fuss when she saw all that on a page, she didn’t do that again about “I can’t do that”, so I was happy about that.  J: So what do you think you had done to help her get to that?  A: Well when we got there, I said, “Oh my goodness, you know these words – this is one you know, this is one you know, and showed her how it works. As long as you’re thinking about your story, you can read this book, and you know what this story is about.  J: So that meaning part really carries things.  A: Yes, it does.  J: Anything else that would help teachers as they do a small group? A: Well, teachers, you just have to remember your job is to make this a successful reading. The new book is not a test. You’re trying to set the kids up to be successful and want to be readers and want to come over to the table. So you’ve got to pick something that’s in their range, that’s not to easy and not to hard, but right at their instructional level. I think that’s the big key to it. |
| Organizational Tips (2:49) | J: How do you deal with the kids reading at different rates and having different needs in the group?  A: I have some that are a lot more verbal than others, so I have to be sure that I am in tune. I picked the one who I did the running record with, I let her start first, and everybody gets a turn, and maybe I focus a little more on them that day, and I make notes in my lesson plan about who I’m focusing on to make sure that I’m hearing everybody and not only going for the ones who talk out more or who are louder. I try to make sure that everybody gets a fair day. Also, she’s new to the group. Another one was ready to go on to a higher group, so for her needs, she needed to be moved out of the group. The flexible grouping – just because they are in your group doesn’t mean they need to stay there all year. You need to really mix it up and think about the child’s strengths and weaknesses and where they need to be to accelerate them.  J: Sometimes you focus more on the child you did the running record on?  A: Sometimes. That’s just my way of doing things, yes.  J: But that might be a way of making sure you’ve gotten to everybody.  A: Yes, I put in my notes a spot for who is getting a running record that day, so that child gets tapped in first that day, to get it started.  J: Because it could get confusing.  A: Right. It does. And you have everybody else out in centers sometimes.  J: Any other organizational tips?  A: I just think you just keep that same lesson format that you saw, where they’re doing their familiar reading, I’ve got my running record going, you’ve got your lesson planned, and if you keep that going that way every day, a lot of times the kids will follow it. It’s all about sequencing the books. You have your books figured out for the week and you don’t have to stop and go over to your basket. You have your set of books that you are choosing from. So it keeps me organized and knowing what I’m heading for as I’m planning my lessons.  J: And you’re also thinking, when you’re choosing those books, about the kinds of things that the kids need at this point?  A: Right. |