Teaching Round

Background

This is my fifth lesson in my writing unit focusing on opinion writing. My unit focuses on introducing students to opinion writing and the importance of using reasons and evidence to back up their claims and ideas. While in this unit, students have been asked to use their own reasoning to provide support for their opinions. Thus far, students have discussed if children should be allowed to eat junk food, learned how to provide support and examples through a text, and written a book review on the text Bedhead. Throughout these opinion-writing lessons, students have been working on including opinion sentence starters and organization through the OREO (Opinion, Reasons, Examples, restate Opinion) strategy. This lesson will serve as the beginning steps of the writing process. In this lesson today students will be beginning the first two steps of the writing process: brainstorming and planning. This lesson will include various turn and talks and discussions. I want students to work with a partner to talk about various interests or ideas for their writing pieces; this will allow students to receive input from fellow peers during the brainstorming step. Students will be using an idea they have brainstormed to start the planning step using the OREO strategy. The focus for this lesson will be how my students transition from think-pair-share to whole group discussion, engagement, and discussion within pairs.

In this lesson I will try to support all types of learners. Students will meet on the rug to discuss the steps of the writing process in their own words. This encourages my students to take ownership of their learning and use prior knowledge to access this lesson. Students will be reminded of turn and talk expectations and given assigned seats for the writing process lesson. I will remind students we are working on opinion writing and how eager I am to hear about the ideas they would like to stress their opinion on. I am giving students the opportunity to think of their own ideas for an opinion piece; as fourth graders, students are being asked to transition from receiving specific examples to brainstorming ideas on their own. If students are unable to come up with strong ideas, prompts will be given. I am hoping by giving students the chance to come up with their own ideas, they will be more engaged in the lesson. Students will be asked to work in pairs to narrow down their ideas to the one they would most enjoy writing about. This will be the transition from brainstorming into the planning segment of the writing process.

Focus of the Learning Activity

For students, the brainstorming and planning steps of the writing process have been introduced as individual work. This lesson will give students a chance to discuss and develop ideas in pairs, small, and whole group discussions. In order to hold students accountable for pair discussions, brainstorm sheets are to be filled out before receiving the OREO planning organizer.

Learning Centered Goals:
• Transition smoothly and maximize time on learning
• Students will actively engage in “turn and talks”, small group, and whole group discussions
• Students will be able to respect one another’s thoughts, ideas, and opinions during discussions
• Thoughtfully and effectively complete the brainstorming and planning steps of the writing process
• Start to develop thoughtful reasons and pieces of evidence to support their opinions
Practice Based Goals:

- Wait time when students respond to a question
- Work on keeping all students engaged and on task while in groups
  - Asking students to share thoughts and ideas about an opinion they would like to write about
- Hold each student accountable during group work and whole-class discussion
  - Encouraging participation from all students whether it's in pairs or whole-class discussion
- Support groups or individual learners who may struggle
  - Prompt students by using ideas pertaining to each students’ interests

Questions:

How are students working in groups? (Are students actively engaged in the discussion? Are all students given a chance to share their ideas, or contribute?)

How does the teacher hold all students accountable for small group and whole-class discussion?

Where is there evidence of the teacher giving students enough time and opportunities for independent thoughts?

Is there evidence of the teacher addressing questions/concerns in a way that encourages students to keep thinking?