Round Reflection

I truly enjoyed this last round with my kids, although I was a little unsure of how the lesson would be received by my peers until they provided me with such positive feedback during our post-round debriefing. While the kids were excited throughout and showed a lot of enthusiasm for poetry in general, they definitely demonstrated a misconception regarding onomatopoeia. Clearly I did not explicitly delineate the difference between onomatopoeic words and words that make a sound (drill). However, everyone in the post-round highlighted that, despite the students’ misconception, this lesson was an excellent introduction. All emphasized that this misconception was simply something that I had plenty of time to address going forward in the unit.

Beyond this misconception, onomatopoeia was definitely a concept that “clicked” for most of my students. All were able to find the onomatopoeia words; it was simply that they also included a few extra in that bunch that were not onomatopoeic. They seemed clearly engaged throughout the whole noise making activity, which was scaffolded by ample teacher modeling as per the gradual release method. I attempted to emphasize how sounds influence a poem, and literalizing that importance certainly solidified their understanding for lessons to come. Several students really shined during this activity. One high flyer who was working alone performed an excellent display of onomatopoeia in a poem about parents returning home. On the other hand, many students were unprepared to present; had this round not been awkwardly sandwiched between library and lunch, I would have liked to perhaps gone back after our initial round of sharing to refine some of the acts. Still, the activity was both rich and fruitful!
Notes on my round questions:

1. Did you encounter students using vocabulary words orally or in writing? Please circle and provide context (onomatopoeia, prose, stanza, line, alliteration).

   My mentors and peers found ample evidence of students using most of these vocabulary terms, although the use was frontloaded to the discussion that began the lesson. As we continue through the unit, I am going to encourage them to use the formal vocabulary. Their use of these words demonstrates a developing understanding of poetic devices, and by employing vocabulary explicitly they will become more concrete.

2. Do the students demonstrate an understanding of how the sounds influence the poem? You might prompt the students with the following: How do these onomatopoetic words change the poem? or Would the poem be the same without these sounds? Why or why not?

   The book that we read and created noise for together was an excellent example of a topic that would’ve made for a boring poem without onomatopoeia. The students excellently described how the poem would be different without onomatopoeia, even going so far as to say that it would be boring, lame, and less interesting. This first lesson on onomatopoeia, coupled with our lessons on alliteration, demonstrates a strong foundation in the influence that sound has on a poem.

3. Did the activity sufficiently help to achieve my learning goals? (Can students identify the device in others’ work? Can students employ onomatopoeia in their own work?)

   Students readily identified the onomatopoeia in the work of other poets, although they did include a few extra words that were not onomatopoetic. When we transition into our next lesson, I cannot wait to see how they use onomatopoeia on their own!