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EDUC 359

Round Reflection

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Reflection on Jen Manglass' Round

Jen Manglass teaches 9th and 11th grade English at University Park Campus School. For this round that she hosted, she has been teaching Romeo and Juliet to her 9th grade students. This specific lesson focused on one of Juliet's monologues in Act VI, towards the end of the play, where Juliet is worried and confused about the plan that she and Romeo have made with Friar Lawrence. Jen's learning goal for her class was to have them be able to both decode the difficult Shakespearean language of the play, and also begin to understand how Shakespeare may have made conscious choices in the language that he used.

Jen began class with a starter activity, where she showed the class a series of pictures and asked them to write down the first three words or phrases that came to mind when they saw the pictures. All of these images were related to what they were about to read, but Jen did not openly state this. Rather, she hoped that later on as they began reading, the students would think back to the images based on what they read. After the starter activity, Jen passed out copies of Juliet's monologue with margins on the page. The left margin was labelled asking the students to translate the monologue in to modern English. The right margin was labelled asking the students to think about what Shakespeare might have been intending to convey with the language he used. The monologue was broken down into four sections to make it easier and less scary for the students to work with. She also passed out a direction sheet that had a list of words that the

students could use when filling in the right column. These were words such as “describing, explaining, foreshadowing, inferring,” which were good stems to help the students have an easier time close reading and analyzing Shakespeare’s language use.

Overall, Jen’s lesson went really well. She asked the observing teachers to focus on an individual group, though I ended up floating around to many different groups as there were more observing teachers than groups. Jen wanted to make sure that her groups were able to work together well and rely on each other if they had any difficulties with the decoding or close reading. For each of the different groups that I observed, it seemed that though they struggled with understanding Shakespeare, they were able to work together to break the difficult language down and translate it into modern English. Most groups were also able to come up with a few ideas to determine what Shakespeare was trying to do in each section of the monologue, whether it was describing, foreshadowing, etc. I did not necessarily see a lot of the groups calling back on the images used in the starter, though one of the groups that I worked with made a brief connection to one of the images. Thinking back to the way Jen structured her activity, she could have possibly included some questions in the direction sheet that asked the students to think back to the pictures that they saw during the beginning of class if they got stuck during their decoding. Otherwise, every other part of the lesson went really well, and by the end when each group shared what they came up with, it was very clear that they understood the monologue and were beginning to see how authors can use language in different ways.

After observing Jen’s lesson, I definitely noticed a lot of techniques that she used that I could use in my own classroom. The list of words that she gave her students to help them begin close reading was very effective, and I could see my students using that resource very well when

thinking about close reading. It was also really enjoyable to watch ninth grade students getting into the difficult Shakespearean language and make sense of it in their own terms. Having taught Shakespeare before, and hoping to eventually teach it again, I definitely was grateful to see one of the different approaches that Jen used to teach this play.