

Nick Porcella

Professor Heather Roberts

Teaching & Learning II

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Round #1: Reflection

I had scheduled my round blindly; I knew that students would engage with a proofreading lesson, though a week away from the round I did not know what the Learning Activity Plan would look like. I decided to plan an activity that was completely new, one that could be challenging and powerful. My idea evolved into a two-part lesson on grammar where I gave students the opportunity to review proofreading notes on their writing to construct personalized dictionaries (Day 1) and then present these to each other (Day 2, the round day). My goals were twofold: first, to get students to engage authentically with common mistakes in their own writing and second, to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge (of fixing errors) through teaching.

The lesson started with my round-goers sitting in on a pre-round where we discussed my goals and agenda. Students arrived and were instructed to read the day's teaching presentation scoring guide. Since students had not been as productive on Day 1 as I had hoped, they were given time to complete at least one element of their dictionary. They moved into predesigned groups, became a teacher and a learner, and ended by coming back to a whole-group discussion. Students passed in to me their teacher scripts and listener templates for assessment.

In delivering the lesson, working with students, and participating in a post-round, I am able to say that the lesson had above-average effectiveness for about two-thirds of my students. Day 1 was not a productive day, but students arrived to class more motivated (Pete Weyler noted this on his sheet) by engaging with the ten-minute window to complete the previous day's

assignment. Several students helped their peers who were not finished. This time seemed well-utilized by most students. The sense of urgency got them working more efficiently. In transition, my modeling was better than it has been in past lessons. Looking back at comments and conversations in class, students knew what they were doing for the activity. My group and the group with Heather Roberts and fellow MAT Mike seemed more productive. Pete's group, based on what comments said on the sheets as well as verbal feedback given during post-round, were unsure how to proceed in teaching. I think the teaching script and listening template helped the groups, and I would definitely keep this. What I would definitely change would be the phrasing of proofreading comments on students' papers. I would make these simpler, to eliminate confusion about less important details (turning "parallel construction error" into "keep all verbs in a list the same tense," for example). Perhaps I could offer more scaffolding by having students with similar errors pair up to see if they agree on a definition.

Regarding my goals, I was able to reach most of them (which I know both from formative assessment in class and from the scripts and templates that I graded). Almost all students (14 of 16 present) were able to write down two grammar terms relevant to their own writing. Students in two of the three groups were able to articulate their understanding through the act of teaching. 15 of 16 who should have completed templated notes for listening *did* complete this part of the assignment. Students left with experience working in groups, and from written and oral feedback, these conversations were respectful and powerful. Overall, students have a better sense of areas to improve in their own grammar in writing and can provide examples from their writing, both in the form of written and oral explanations for these errors. I would definitely teach a similar lesson again, with modifications. Students were overall receptive to the lesson, and engaged in some powerful learning activities.