

Teach It to Learn It: Keys to Proofreading

Background:

At the beginning of this week, my class of Claremont 9th graders officially wrapped up a horror unit. This, in tandem with the previous memoir unit, is helping to inform our mini-unit on proofreading. Students' focus this unit is on looking back at some of the writing done this year in order to begin looking forward to future writing. To make the grammar and revising processes as authentic as possible, students will create their own proofreading guides, relevant/specific to themselves, to use for the remainder of the year.

Students yesterday began by examining some proofreading comments on past essays or memoirs. They took time to find explanations and definitions for common grammar mistakes in their writing, and used these to formulate their own simplified definitions. Today, they aim to teach these simplified definitions to a small group of their peers. After all, often the best way to learn is to teach!

Round Focus:

The major goal of the lesson today is for students to be able to orally teach accessible, personally-researched definitions for common grammar mistakes. Yesterday, we began the process by crafting personal dictionaries for some terms. Students will be working today in small groups of 5-6 students each, with 1 or 2 round-goers also sitting in with each group. Scaffolds for learning include teacher scripts and personal dictionary templates. Students will leave today with a fuller understanding of how they can improve their grammar in context.

After directions, we will divide up into our groups. Then, students will take turns teaching their grammar definitions to each other. When not actively teaching, students will be taking some notes on a provided template. With time, we will debrief by considering the value in teaching as a tool for learning.

Learning-Centered Inquiry:

(1) When students are in the role of TEACHER, do they mention the grammar term that they are teaching and provide a definition with example? What evidence do you see that they fully comprehend the term themselves?

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(2) When students are in the role of LISTENER, do they seem to be listening to their peers AND taking notes on the provided handout? Record evidence.

Practice-Centered Inquiry:

(1) Are students using the model scripts that I provided? Record evidence of whether this helps or hinders them in communicating their ideas.

(2) Do any groups of students finish too quickly? What is their tendency after completing a group assignment? Do they stay focused on the next steps, or drift into talking about unrelated conversations? Record examples.