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The Big Deal eBook Assignment
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Resource #1

What is the resource?

The resource that I found to use was on page 33 of The Big Deal eBook. It's called "math journals." Basically, it's a way for students to explore their thinking surrounding a math problem on a higher level than simple answer production. Teachers provide open-ended prompts related to students "own attitudes and feelings about math" as well as problems for students to explore. Students work in small groups to examine the problems, take notes in their journals and find solutions. At the end of a certain amount of time, the initial journal entries are looked at to see how student attitudes towards math have changed or grown.

How does it fit within the four C's?

This resource fits in the four C's under "Thinking Critically and Solving Problems." Students aren't just allowed to give an answer to a problem. They must actually process the problem through group solving and taking notes in the journal. An answer is not enough.

What is the linguistic application?

I see all four language domains being used. First, students are writing in the journals about their math beliefs. Second, they are orally communicating their ideas for solutions to the problems as well as listening to other members sharing their ideas. All the while, they are also writing notes for the problem as the group works towards a solution. In the end, students are going back through their notes and journal entries to read how their ideas about math have changed.

How could you use this resource to promote language learning?

I could see myself easily using this resource to promote language learning. First of all, it provides every student with a comfortable avenue in which to share their personal beliefs about math as well as their problem solving ideas. It helps build a classroom community in which all ideas are valued and recorded. Students that might normally be quiet are now given the opportunity to share first by themselves and then in a small group. The individual and small group settings provide students with a less nerve-wracking language experience. When students are comfortable, they are more likely to share.

I also believe this teaching strategy is excellent for language promotion because it involves all four language domains at some point in the process. It helps students to see that reading, writing, discussing and listening are present in mathematics classes. I can see where students may get the misperception that reading only occurs at reading and writing only occurs at writing. This strategy connects across the curriculum and across the language domains. For me, it seems like the most bang for my teaching buck!

Resource #2

What is the resource?

The second resource I found is http://www.piclits.com. This is an online resource that offers students the opportunity to choose a picture and then select words to create a matching sentence. In order to create a sentence, students will drag pre-selected words from categories such as nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs. After creating their piclit, students can post it online, save or email it.

How does it fit within the four C's?

This resource fits under the four C's in the area of "Communicating and Sharing Ideas." Students have the opportunity to create their own one sentence message and share it with others. Additionally, students can "Explore the Gallery" to see what other piclits have been created. From there, students can comment on and rate their findings. The resource essentially provides a 21st century platform to communicate through digital images around the globe.

What is the linguistic application?

The primary linguistic application is reading. Reading is used to select the words needed for the sentence. It is also used to interpret whether the chosen words make sense in their sentences. This resource could easily translate to writing if students used it as springboard for a story or essay. They could visualize the topic of their story using the picture and write the main idea of the story using the words. Listening and speaking could also be pulled in if students were given the opportunity to print and present their piclits.

How could you use this resource to promote language learning?

I could use this resource to promote language learning in my first-grade classroom first in the area of reading. Over the last few weeks, I have been focusing on comprehension strategies with my students. Visualization is one of our key comprehension strategies. Piclits would be a great way to show what students visualized when they read a story. It could also tie to our strategy of determining importance if students were to pick the key element of the story, find an accompanying picture and write a main idea sentence. As Freeman and Freeman shared, "If the goal of reading is to construct meaning, then readers should use all available information" (p. 27). Piclits could be used as a way for my students to construct meaning.

I also see myself using piclits as a way to incorporate technology in our writing curriculum. As I said earlier, I would have students create a picture and main idea sentence to match their own story. I could even see these being printed for use as covers for student-created books.

Finally, I could see piclits being used in the speaking and listening assessments given to students. They would be especially useful at the beginning of the year when students are often still shy speaking with peers. By prewriting a sentence to share, students may be less nervous. I might also incorporate community building by having students choose a picture that has involves something that is important to them. The sentence could help explain the photo's significance. Sharing personal pieces such as those would aid in building connections among students.

Works Cited

Freeman, D. E., & Freeman, Y. S. (2004). *Essential linguistics: What you need to know to teach*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Math Journals - http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/talking-writing-reasoning-making-820.html

PicLits - http://www.piclits.com/compose_dragdrop.aspx