

SDAIE Content Lesson Observation

[REDACTED]
Date of Observation: November 17, 2011
[REDACTED]

Subject/Grade Level: Science 6th Grade

Lesson Topic: Earth has several layers

Length of Lesson: 1.5 hours

Materials Used: Document camera, handout from *Interactive Reader*, highlighters, pencils, brainstorming graphic organizer, graphic organizer on properties of Earth's layers

Objectives

The objectives for the lesson were: Identify properties of the layers of the Earth; Explain that these layers have parts by carefully reading in our Interactive Readers and filling in the graphic organizers. The lesson I observed was day 2 of the lesson. The teacher informed me that on day 1 of the lesson she had orally informed her students of the objectives and what they would learn by the end of the lesson. As I observed the beginning of the lesson, she reiterated the objectives by telling the students that they were going to continue reading about the Earth's layers and finish filling in information in their graphic organizers.

Building Background

The teacher began the lesson with a review of what they learned last time, "Last time we learned about why the Earth has layers, can someone tell me what they wrote on their worksheet?" The students already had some background knowledge because they learned about why the Earth has layers. The teacher built on this knowledge by reviewing what they learned and by placing some responses on the document camera. She also builds background knowledge by previewing key vocabulary words. As a whole class they write out the definitions of a few key words: Core, Mantle, Crust.

Key Vocabulary

The teacher emphasized key vocabulary by introducing key words in the beginning of the lesson. She orally explained the definition and wrote them down on the document camera and had the students do the same on their handouts. She also contextualized these words by showing a picture of the core, mantle and crust. The teacher also highlighted key vocabulary throughout the article and stopped to ask the students what the words means. She also shows visuals. At the end of the lesson she went back to the handout that had the three key vocabulary words and asked the students to define the words.

Comprehensible Input

The teacher was very clear in her explanations and made sure the students understood the concepts in the article by having multiple students share their thoughts and paraphrase main ideas. She checked for comprehension frequently. She also showed visuals for key vocabulary and the several layers of the Earth. The teacher made the input more comprehensible by reciting the sentences out loud as she wrote down the student's responses. She spoke slowly and with clear enunciation. She also modeled for the students what they should be doing as they were reading the article. She would highlight significant sentences or words in the article on the document camera as a student was reading out loud.

SDAIE Strategies

The teacher uses several SDAIE strategies in this lesson. I discussed a few in the previous sections, such as the use of **visuals** to contextualize concepts and vocabulary, and **modeling** what students should be doing to help them understand the article by **highlighting** and **filling in** the appropriate graphic organizer on the document camera. She used the **document camera** to help students follow along and stay on track. The teacher also used **graphic organizers** so students could organizer the information and build retention by paraphrasing main concepts. The teacher

great!

also has the students **label** each layer of the Earth and the densest parts with crayons. This also contextualizes the key concepts. Another strategy she used was **bridging**. She tried connecting the concepts to student experiences. For example, she compared the asthenosphere to toothpaste, assuming most students have brushed their teeth with toothpaste and know the texture.

Interaction

The teacher provided frequent opportunities for interaction throughout her whole lesson. The teacher randomly chose a different student to read aloud each paragraph of the article. After a student read a paragraph, the teacher asked the students what was something they highlighted in that paragraph. She chose multiple students to respond. Then she would chose a different student to read the next paragraph and the cycle would continue. After the class finished reading about an entire concept, she would have the students share their thoughts with their elbow partner and they would work together to fill out information on their graphic organizer that pertained to that concept. They would reconvene as a whole class and the teacher would choose different pairs to share their answers to the class.

Language Skills

This lesson integrated all language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing. The students would all read along as one student read out loud. Students would take turns talking out loud in front of the whole class and/or with partners. Students would listen as others shared thoughts and answers. Students would each write their answers on their own graphic organizers and handout.

Feedback/Assessment

The teacher frequently assessed the students' learning by having multiple students read their answers aloud and share their thoughts. There were also a couple of assessment questions

for each concept on the article handout. The teacher would have the students answer these on their paper and a few were chosen to answer the questions out loud. She also provided feedback after each response. If the response was appropriate, she would praise them and repeat their answer aloud and write it on the document camera. If the answer was inappropriate, she would tell them, "Good try, ____, anyone else want to help ____ out?" At one point in the lesson, the teacher put a student's graphic organizer under the document camera and told the class that this was a very good response and everyone clapped. She also told everyone else that they all had good answers.

Metacognition

The teacher gave her students time to process the new information. After each concept read, the students were told that they had four minutes to work with their elbow partner to share their thoughts and fill out their graphic organizers. She ended up giving them about eight to ten minutes to share and write their answers. Then she gave them time to debrief and share their answers out loud with the class. At the end of the lesson, the students were presented with a graphic organizer that had a variety of terms. They reviewed the terms as a class and circled the ones that had to do with the contents of the lesson.

Reflection: SDAIE Observation

The science lesson I observed helped me better understand the principles of SDAIE. I thought it was a very good lesson and well organized. It was applicable to the needs of English learners: “to learn grade-appropriate content; to master English vocabulary and grammar; to learn academic English (i.e., the semantic and syntactic ways that English is used in content subjects); and to develop strategies for learning how to learn” (Diaz-Rico 109). The teacher addressed these needs through the emphasis and contextualization of key vocabulary, by giving opportunities for all students, including ELs, to interact and use both conversational and academic English, and by modeling strategies for learning how to learn through use of the document camera and highlighting. I really liked how the teacher provided a lot of opportunity for different types of interaction. According to Diaz-Rico, “the organization of discourse is important for language acquisition in content classes (121).” The class was never dominated by teacher talk. The teacher only spoke when asking a question, reiterating a student’s response, and when giving positive feedback. I guess you could say that the lesson was taught by the students. The students are the ones who read, told the teacher what to highlight, and came up with the answers. The ELs in the class benefited from cooperative learning. They were given opportunity to work with their elbow partner and become more confident with the learned concept.

When I become a teacher, I will definitely incorporate SDAIE in my classroom. I will use all of the strategies the teacher used in her science lesson. One thing I would probably add is the use of more visuals and 3D models. I think a lot of visuals and models/replicas would really help my EL students learn and keep them interested. Also, I would try to add a hands-on activity in my lessons, if possible. I will emphasize the fact that I loved the interaction in this lesson. I want all of my students to feel comfortable and confident enough to talk in my class. I want it to be a

fun learning environment. I think SDAIE is great and really supports the idea that all students can learn.



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