

LMES Rocks Reader's Workshop

LMES staff and students have been working extremely hard implementing our regional Language Arts initiatives. Below is a very brief overview of the work. I have had the privilege of being able to see the fruits of all their labor. To allow them to see it as well, I created this video. Enjoy!

Chris Moretti, Principal

Since September, students have had increased opportunities for meaningful reading and writing experiences within a workshop framework. Reading and Writing workshop is designed to help children become independent in the process of learning to read and write. It is based on the premise that anytime you learn something new, you naturally follow certain steps to master it. You begin by watching someone else do it, and then you practice it as someone watches you. Next, they offer helpful advice and feedback as you continue to practice independently until you can successfully do it on your own. Because of this gradual release of support, the following are the essential components of the workshop that foster this kind of learning:

The Mini-lesson:

During the mini-lesson the teacher explicitly demonstrates strategies and skills that good readers and writers use to construct meaning. During this time the students know that the teacher will be showing them exactly what he/she wants them to apply during their independent work time. The teacher consistently reminds them of *why* he/she is showing them a strategy/skill. As a part of the mini-lesson, classroom charts are created and used as a resource and reminder during independent, partnership and small group work time.

Mini-lessons need to be thoughtfully planned according to what students need to get them to progress as readers and writers. In other words, they need to be somewhat systematically planned so that they build on one another. In-depth units of study have been developed through curriculum writing at the regional level and are being implemented so that students have a deeper understanding of literacy skills and concepts.

Independent Reading, Conferring, Small Group Instruction:

Following the mini-lesson, students apply the strategy or skill as well as previously taught strategies and skills to their independently chosen, just-right reading selections. Classroom libraries have been organized by genre and in a way where students can better choose books independently. As children are reading independently, the teacher conferences with students and/or meets with small groups for additional instructional purposes. This also applies to writing.

Partner Reading:

Partner reading can take many forms depending on the grade, skill level and/or teacher and student preference. Children can work in pairs or small groups either reading the same book or different books. Children are typically paired with another student(s) at a similar skill level in order to help one another problem solve what is being read. This similar skill level pairing fosters problem solving by all children in the partnership. Rich conversation about the content of their book(s) takes place as they problem solve what is being read.

Sharing/ Reflection:

After independent reading is over, the class gathers together to share and reflect on their independent and partnership work. They discuss strategies that they have applied during the independent and shared reading blocks.