

K-3 Essential 9, Bullet 2 Observation Sample Video

MAISA Literacy Essentials

<https://youtu.be/DjzlrXUfWWM>

Narrator: Ongoing observation and assessment of language and literacy development should inform literacy instruction. In this classroom the teacher prioritizes observation during actual reading and writing.

Teacher: So today when you guys are reading independently, I want you to continue to think about the author's purpose, and I want you thinking about why did the author write this? What does the author want me to know or to explain? So, you're going to find a quiet spot and an informational textbook that you can read to think about the author's purpose.

The particular standard I'm looking at today is whether or not students understand the author's purpose when they're reading informational text. You can see on the side, I wrote down the questions that I'll be asking students just so I don't forget them on the side. So it's right there in front of me on the page where I'm taking notes. So some of those questions that I'm going to ask today are what is the main purpose? What does the author want me to know or you to know? And what is the author trying to explain?

What do you think the author wants us to know when we're reading this book?

Student: That the pandas are getting near the extinct.

Teacher: So you think the purpose of this book is that different ways that we can

Student: Help Pandas

Teacher: Help Pandas? Ah. Let's open up and read a few pages and see if that seems true. Reading

Student: As we're two kinds of giant...

Teacher: As my students are reading and writing, I can actually learn a lot about their knowledge and what they know and what they can do independently. And so if I'm able to sit down and have a conference with them and talk to them, I can learn a lot about where they're at as far as skills and strategies so I can learn what type of books they typically choose. I can learn what their interests are, I can learn how they're decoding if I listen to them read, I can hear their fluency and how they're able to decode words and if they have prosody. And then I can also through my questioning, hear if they are comprehending and thinking about the book, and especially applying our learning to their reading independently. I can also learn if they're meeting the standards for the grade level, and that's something that I use my notes to specifically check for.

So, what kind of information did the author give us there?

Student: There are two kinds of pandas and one is related to the cool, and another one is related to just the panda.

Teacher: And I noticed something in here. I noticed that the author told us exactly what kind of panda we're reading about in this book. Can you find the sentence where he told us that

Student: This book is about giant pandas?

Teacher: So you were thinking when we were reading at the beginning that the author was going to tell us ways that we can help pandas that are endangered. Now we have a little more information. What does the author want us to be able to know about endangered pandas?

Student: There's two

Teacher: Kinds and which kind can we guess is probably endangered kind of panda

Student: Giant panda.

Teacher: Giant panda. Wow. So interesting.

Student: This one is about the red panda? Yeah, exactly.

Teacher: Very interesting. Thank you. Tony.

I have a few different ways that I take notes so that I can have a really good understanding of student knowledge. I often use different sheets to record my observations with students. The sheet that I use today has the standard and then all of the students listed on it so that as I'm going through I can take a look and see what students still need, practice with that standard, who's able to do it independently. It kind of gives me a snapshot across my classroom. And then I use that to transfer information onto another sheet that has the standards and there's just one child per sheet for this. And that gives me a really good understanding for each child individually what they still need to practice or what they're secure with. I write down a variety of things. I write down the title of the book, the genre of the book. I write down answers that the students might give me to the questions. I'm looking specifically if they're able to use the strategy that we're working on in this case, author's purpose and an informational text. And sometimes I'm writing down some misconceptions they might have or what they can do independently. So I'm note taking in a lot of different ways. So once they've shown me that they can meet the standard, I mark it with an S, which means secure

Student: Today. Snakes. Snakes.

Teacher: Any idea what the main purpose of this book?

Student: Different kinds of snakes.

Teacher: I can see why you're saying that because I can use, I'm using the subheadings here to see this is about swing snakes, big beavers. I'm noticing the authors naming different kinds of snakes in here. What does the author want you to know about different kinds of snakes on this page?

Student: That these snakes have... Some are bigger and some are smaller.

Teacher: So is the author telling you about the size of the snakes on this page? Can you show me a spot where the author tells you about the size of the snake

Student: Right here? It can be, but they can also be small and beautiful.

Teacher: So definitely on this page the author wants me to know that snakes can be different sizes. What else does the author want us to know from this page?

Student: Different families that snakes are in. They can be in a different kind of family.

Teacher: Oh, so interesting. So what kind of families are there for snakes?

Student: The same snake. It says the Cobra family is a poisonous one and contains many kinds of cobras. Yeah.

Teacher: Wow. You know what I'm impressed with you doing today? Not only are you thinking about the author's purpose and what the author wants you to know, but every time I ask you can you show me how you know that you were able to go back into the text and point to exactly where the author was talking about the size of the snake over here and you were able to use this section to tell me exactly where the author was talking about snake families. So you're really using good evidence to support why you think the author wants us to know about the size of the snakes and different snake families. Keep doing that while you're reading. That's really, really great. I'm not a magician and I can't remember things or bring them back to my memory even after a day of conferencing with a student. So being able to write these down and then go back over time and look at them, it helps when I'm doing report writing, it helps when I'm communicating with parents.

It helps when I'm planning for my small groups, even if it's the next day or the next week, I can look back at my notes and there's physical representation of what students can do. So it helps me plan for small groups because it helps me know if there's a particular strategy that one child needs in a small group. And if there's more than one child, I can pull that small group and work with them. Or it helps me to know if I need to check back in with them at a later date to see if now they can do the skill.

Teacher: Rodney, What are you reading today?

Student: I'm reading National Geographic book.

Teacher: Annette, what's the title of this book?

Student: Tiger In Trouble. It's not just about tigers, it's about these animals that these animals that live somewhere, but they had to move to a zoo.

Teacher: Interesting, because I'm noticing that this is a chapter book, and it looks like you're on about the last chapter in the book. So, have you noticed something that was similar about the other chapters?

Student: Similar? Yeah, that all of them lived somewhere. They were just fine, but then they were not fine. They just kept getting sick and then they went to a zoo and the caretakers at the zoo, they cared for them very much.

Teacher: So, If you think about the author, the person who wrote this, what is the author trying to explain in all these stories about animals that were sick and then went to the zoo to be cared for?

Student: She's trying to explain about you should care about all animals.

Teacher: Do you have any connections to that from any other stories we've been reading?

Student: Yeah.

Teacher: What is that?

Student: About Ivan?

Teacher: How was that book? That's a fictional book. How was that similar to this one?

Student: Since it wasn't like a true story, it was just made up, it still had animals that are sick and that weren't taken care of, were not taken care of well, and they ended up going to a zoo.

Teacher: So, what you're doing is you're making connections because this is a non-fiction book and you're making a connection to a fiction book called *The One and Only Ivan*. And you're seeing that in both books, the author wants you to know that it's important to take care of animals. So you're thinking about the theme between two different books, really excellent job reading. Keep doing that while you finish.

It can be challenging if you don't take a minute to write things down. If you just give yourself a minute to write down you're thinking and record what you're noticing through your conferences, it's helpful to be able to go back and look at that. When students make progress, I think I'm as happy as they are. I'm just thrilled that they're accomplishing the standard and that they're showing growth. And I make sure to point that out to students and really prompt them to be proud of themselves and to continue to grow as they read.

Narrator: Learn more at literacyessentials.org.