1. Adapt a lesson reflecting what you’ve learned in this course.

Fifth Grade Opinion Writing - Should zoos exist?

**Overview**: This is a classic end of year task for 5th graders, but I have paid close attention to integrate the different aspects from Tankersley’s text *Literacy Strategies for Grades 4-12* in order to best meet the needs of my fifth graders. The goal is to support all students in their higher-order thinking (and reading) in order to bring it all together in a culminating performance task. Students will be answering the question: “Should zoos exist?” through the careful consumption and critique of multiple pieces of text.

**CCSS:**

**ELA-Literacy.W.5.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

**ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.2** Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

**ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9** Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

**Background:**

Students have finished the class read of the *The One and Only Ivan* by K. A. Applegate. As an end of the year performance task they will research different texts that deal with the problem: Are zoos beneficial or harmful to animals. Students will practice annotating articles, collecting evidence, and then synthesizing and applying their understanding in the form of a written, persuasive essay.

The use of *The One and Only Ivan* as a shared foundation provided not only a model for student (it was a shared read together - teacher reading aloud and students reading along) but give a shared place from which to frame the discussion for and against zoos.

Throughout the year the students have been practicing close reading and annotating strategies (highlighting, underlining, writing the gist on the text, etc) as a way to process and take notes on nonfiction texts.

**Reading**:

The format of the reading of each piece of text goes as follows: Teacher previews the text and frontloads any concepts/vocabulary. Students then watch/read the text twice, taking notes and focusing on pieces of evidence for/against zoos. Then the group comes together to present the information and discuss what it adds to the arguments. Students track their opinion from the start of the activity all the way to when they decide firmly on the topic. This level of reflection allows them to notice how their ideas change as new information is added and to track its evolution as they read.

Video 1:Phoenix Zoo Arabian Oryx Story <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4WE7c6PdZc>

Video 2: Are zoos helping endangered species?<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/zoos-evolve-to-protect-endangered-species/>

Article 1: “The Swazi Eleven” by Kelly Boland <http://www.mendota289.org/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/4e55466221c17/5th%20Grade%20Text%203%20-%20The%20Swazi%20Eleven.pdf>

Article 2: “Zoochosis,” by Stephanie Santana and Shauwn Lukose

<http://www.mendota289.org/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/4e55466221c17/5th%20Grade%20Text%202%20-%20Zoochosis.pdf>

Graph 1: Lifespan of Female Elephants in Zoos and the Wild

<https://poway.instructure.com/courses/2551/files/6039606/download?verifier=Hd3s7uIpdVGH3tf3U4QwZHCrMFL0Zwc4iCTt2gyz>

**Writing:** Students will write an opinion essay answering whether zoos benefit or harm endangered animals. They will use the information and annotated articles from the previous articles, videos, and graph to support their opinion. Using the writing process, they have practiced all year, they will independently draft, write, and finalize a piece of writing that they will present to a small group.

1. **Implement your lesson with students.**
2. **Write a 250-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.**

After adapting this lesson, I found that a lot had been improved upon in the previous years.

* Having the performance task follow the reading of *The One and Only Ivan* was a means of providing a common entry point for all students. Not only did the shared reading bring students together (and modeled good reading for all studnets) but it helped build engagement and provided background knowledge for students. It is a creative take on the argument for and against zoos and was a fantastic place to start.
* Having students use multiple different texts (and types of texts) allows for a variety of entry points and views to be taken into consideration. If one of the texts didn’t quite click with a student, there were more entry points for them.
* Having students discuss their findings after each text was a great way to co-construct understanding and support each other.

Some thing I would work to improve:

* While we have used a common annotation/close reading protocol throughout the year, I might structure the actual reading of the texts more. The same goes for the watching of the videos (we have done some, but clearly not enough practice on critically examining and note taking when consuming visual media).
* I wonder about providing a means for students to research their own information. Curating the text for them works well, but I wonder how much more it could be if they were given the reigns.
* I wonder about having the only option be writing an essay. I think providing different ways to showcase their understanding could work even better (an article/op-ed, a video, some sort of proposal or art project).

1. **Include any student feedback on your lesson.**

I think I should have combined this with my reflection, because it was the student feedback that I used to inform my understanding of what worked and what could be improved, especially the improved. Students were candid about liking the novel I used to introduce the project. They also were the once who expressed the desire to try something other than writing to present their opinions and the wondering about independently searching for information. On a whole though, students enjoyed the lesson, were engaged in the learning, and were able to present their understanding through writing.

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2. Submit your modified lesson to your instructor via the online response box or file upload.