

Debbie Miller presentation notes by Nelle:

Debbie read this quote and I love it:

"What if we viewed smart as a goal that students can work toward rather than as something they either are or not?"

In her presentation, she shared she had been teaching for thirty years and this is the first year she did not sign her contract. She shared a picture of her basement where she has unloaded all her collection of books and "stuff". Missing the classroom environment, she shared a corner of her basement where she has duplicated her yellow door {see the front of her book, RWM} placed a rug, lamp and bookcases of books all around her, and her rocking chair as to somehow recapture the feeling of her classroom as she prepares for these presentations and reflects.

Thought shot by Nelle: How warm and wonderful is that!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

There was not a handout, so the notes below were scripted while she was presenting, so they are not exact, but as close as I could come to points made in her actual presentation.

Creating a Culture of Thinking in the Classroom

1. Model our Literate Life and language we use to talk about books and ideas.
2. Nurturing, honoring, validating student thinking
3. Collecting books that give kids something to think about and talk about
4. Providing daily opportunities for practice
5. Capturing thinking by co-constructing anchor charts and student response sheets

that make thinking visible, public, and permanent.

6. Creating thoughtful environment that reflects what we believe about teaching and learning.

She gave two examples of kids defining:

She said, "At first I modeled using defining language. But then the kids starting to use their language to define:

Ben's thinking, Some just leaks through.

Isabella's response to What is inferring? ...creatively mold your thoughts, feeling, and background knowledge into the story..."

[Thought shot by Nelle: Vogotsky's assistance to self-assistance model. Bring kids to independence, our ultimate goal.]

She said fifteen years ago she learned about what proficient readers do and what do less successful readers do. Then she got together in collaboration with other educators and ask, "What does this look like in teaching?"

She said, "I question if I were a proficient reader at all."

Thought Shot by Nelle: "I admit, I have ask that same question."

She was encouraged by Keene to slow down and first explore this by learning about what we do while reading, jot down thinking in the margins, have conversations about what we as readers do.

She said, What changed everything? Awareness that we know what our mental processes are to know what to teach our kids.

She talked about the power of collaboration and that how the study groups interactive conversations developed attitudes of "Bring it on. We can do this. We see ourselves as smart, proficient and Create A Culture of thinking for ourselves and our kids."

"The kids start to doing amazing things. Are they smarter, No, we're setting our expectations higher and it changed the kids."

She encourages kids to share quotes from their reading because she has modeled that from her own reading.

She shared a handout made by the children that far exceeded the criteria she had made on a handout.

Later, I will try to get to the draw layer and create what she showed us and send it for the files if that's okay?

In Summary: This was the highlight of my career! I feel more confident "bring it on, I can do this" She was everything in person that she is on video and in her book. Her "Voice" speaks volumes to the heart of teaching and the teacher.

Nelle

Submitted a picture for files showing how warm, friendly and approachable she is. Teachers in the picture are Left to right, Barbara Lash,[Nelle] Mary Smith, Debbie Miller, Cathy Weathers, Debbie Ayres, October 16,2003.

Nelle