

Questioning Lesson Using Art Prints by Camille

Okay, guys, I took the plunge and started questioning today. I started by reviewing our (HUGE) list of things that good readers do (a la Debbie Miller). Then I told them I was going to teach them something new that good readers and good thinkers do: they ask questions. I showed the print "The Boat Party" by Mary Cassatt and told them that when I look at this picture lots of questions pop into my head like: Where are these people going? What will they do when they get there? Is that the baby's mother? Is that the baby's father? Are they in a sailboat since I see something that looks like it might be a sail? If this is a sailboat, why is the man rowing the boat? The water looks choppy, is a storm going to start?

Then being me (and always being in a hurry and wanting to skip steps), I decided to find out what kinds of questions my students could ask about pictures. I showed them "Girl with a Hoop" by Renoir. This painting has a girl in a very fancy dress holding a hoop and a stick. I gave them thinking time and then had them share their questions. Here are some of them: Why does the girl have a hoop? Why is she holding a stick? Why is she dressed up fancy like she is going to church? Why is the grass different colors of green? (This question fascinated me since Renoir was an impressionist and used many, many different shades of the same color to create things.) Why did the person make this picture? (This question got me to thinking about author's purpose - I would have NEVER thought to ask that question!) I quickly wrote their questions down because I wanted to gather some data and get a feel for where they are at with questioning before we even start our study.

Then I told my students that good readers also ask questions. I showed them a book that I was reading that was challenging to me (The Hours) and said that I asked lots and lots of questions while I was reading it. Then I read the first paragraph from the book asking questions as I read. (This idea was from Strategies that Work.)

Then (this honestly did not take as long to happen as it is taking me to tell you), I pulled out a picture book

(Charlie Anderson) that I had prepared ahead of time with questions on post-its and did a think aloud. Sometimes my students wanted to answer my questions, but because my objective for today was to get them thinking about questioning, we did not answer my questions.

I plan to do more think alouds over the next few days with art and with picture books and then???

Camille

P.S. Sharon, I read your question about the types of pictures we use. It is making me reflect on my choice of art (I LOVE reflecting.) I chose to use art prints because I love art and am thrilled that I have a new way to incorporate it into the curriculum.

The prints worked well for questioning. I am going to think some more about using art prints for SI.