RI.9-10.2

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

Strategy/Lesson Suggestions

Magnet Summary. Students conduct a close read of a short text within the 9-10 grade band text complexity range (e.g., Anna Quindlen's "A Quilt of a Country", Learned Hand's "I am an American Day Address",...). While reading, they identify the specific words or phrases (magnets) that drive the text. Students record each magnet on a separate index card and list with them specific supporting words or phrases used by the author to anchor the magnet firmly within the text. The process is modeled with 9th grade students whereas 10th grade students are provided greater independence to complete the task. (Buehl, 1993)

One Sentence Summations. Randomly selected members of the class read a selection of the text aloud (when appropriate pre-determine the random readers a day prior to the activity). Student facilitators lead the class in a brief whole group discussion of the section, resulting in a short list of significant ideas conveyed by the author. The student facilitators are then given a short amount of time to quickly transform the list of ideas into an objective, one sentence summary which includes the proper use of a colon or semicolonthus modeling the activity. The remaining text is divided into sections and students repeat the process independently (Santa, Havens and Valdes, 2004).

Smart Art. Students utilize a SmartArt Funnel Graphic to construct their one sentence summation.

Assessment FOR Learning Suggestions

Magnet Summary. Students use the words on each card to construct a single sentence summary of the text. The teacher emphasizes the need to "use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to (their) writing" (L.9-10.1.b). Upon completion, students trade sentences within small groups. Students highlight the phrases and clauses utilized to communicate each magnet summary and utilize a style guide to provide each other objective feedback with regards to proper usage. The teacher facilitates small group discussions and utilizes student feedback to construct targeted language lessons. Students additionally engage in discussions with regards to accuracy in the interpretation of the text.

Formative Assessment Tip. "Often a single assessment is used for multiple purposes; in general, however, the more purposes a single assessment aims to serve, the more each purpose will be compromised" (Pelligrino, Chudowsky, Glaser, 2001).

One Sentence Summations. Upon completion of the activity, students trade sentences within small groups. Students utilize a style guide to provide specific peer-to-peer feedback regarding proper usage of a colon and semicolon. The teacher listens intently and targets usage clarifications appropriately. Students additionally engage in discussions with regards to accuracy in the interpretation of the text. When finished, students repeat the process by funneling the section summations into an objective one sentence summation of the entire text.

These suggestions can also be adapted to diagnose competency in the following standards; (W.9-10.4) (SL.9-10.1,3,4) (L.9-10.1,2,4,5,6).

References:

Buehl, D. (1993). Magnetized: Students are drawn to technique that identifies key words. WEAC News & Views, 29(4), 13.
Pelligrino, J., Chudowsky, N., Glaser, R. (2001). Knowing what students know: The science and design of educational assessment. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. Santa, C., Havens, L. & Valdes, B. (2004). Project CRISS: Creating independence through student-owned strategies (3rd Ed.). Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt.

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