Constructivist Approach to Close Reading

Theories of learning were first widely introduced in the 20th century. They were

primarily based on didactic pedagogies the outcomes of which required simple yes or no answers

as a response to the course content. However, with the development of computer networking, the

Internet, and the Web arose the drive for new educational transformations that had to happen to

keep up with the inventions in technology. Behaviorist, cognitivist, and constructivist theories

were not entirely living up to distance education needs considering rapid changes in ways

information was delivered. Development of World Wide Web set the stage for new learning

theories in the 21st century (Harasim, 2012). The lesson based on online group collaboration

learning is described below.

Name: English Language Arts

Grade: 9th grade

Time Allotted: 90 minutes

Lesson Topic: Close Reading

Context for Learning*:*

The purpose of the close reading assignment is for the students to examine an author's

language and ideas in depth. A close reading of a text increases comprehension of complex

thoughts, ideas, and meanings, and promotes high order thinking to analyze successfully and

problem solve written materials. This lesson is introductory/developmental to the ninth-grade

cohort.

Objectives (observable and measurable):

- The students will be able to cite strong textual evidence to determine the meaning of literary terms and devices used in the short story, "Once Upon a Time."

- The students will be able to define the key literary devices juxtaposition, irony, foreshadowing, symbolism, tone, and theme in the short story, "Once Upon a Time."

- The student will be able to find and present textual evidence of the use of literary devices used in the short story, "Once Upon a Time" to peers in their group.

- The student will be able to clarify the meaning of unknown words and phrases using context clues and supporting textual evidence in the short story, "Once Upon a Time."

Materials:

- Teacher: Laptop, Smart Board, or White Board (if in a classroom environment)

- Students: Laptops, "Once Upon a Time" text, or a pen or a pencil if in a classroom environment.

To encourage collaborative learning, the students will be designated to five-person groups based on student personalities and academic abilities. Prior to group activities, students will be reminded that each group member is responsible for explaining and providing information to their peers, so cooperation in the discussion will inevitably lead to successful learning. Students will work together to create knowledge by sharing how they got to a particular answer (Bates, 2014).

Provisions for Student Learning:

This lesson will employ the grouping strategy, which allows each student to demonstrate their responsibility to one another to accomplish a common goal. As each student is dependent on each other, there is an emphasis on effective communication to complete the assignment.

Moving from one group activity to another promotes interest in learning and allows each student

to demonstrate their academic ability and knowledge with their peers (Bates, 2014).

Prior to the activities, group settings will be designated, and one literary device card will

be assigned to each student. Pre-selecting which literary device a student will identify minimizes

any conflict among students who do not work well together.

Introductory / Developmental Activities

- **Warm-Up/Opening & Motivator/Bridge** – **5 minutes**

  Review: Students will be asked to pull out their "Once Upon a Time" text on their

  laptops. Over a two-week period, the students have been doing a close read of the text to

  learn how to annotate a text/passage for key words, definitions, and literary terms.

  The students will recall the end focus of the previous lesson, and how the author uses

  contrasting words/sentences throughout her story by looking through the text and their

  previous highlights.

  Purpose: Students will be informed that they will continue to work on text analysis,

  annotation, and finding textual evidence to support their understanding of complex texts.

  They will be reminded of a previously discussed analogy; that the 'triangle' is the

  strongest shape and requires three sides to support its strength. Therefore, when citing

  evidence in a text, it is always best to provide three words, sentences, or phrases to

  support/strengthen literary findings.

- **Guided Practice/Modeling:** **- 10 minutes**

  A copy of the notecard juxtaposition will be displayed on the smart board with the

  definition and an accompanying question, "How does the author's use of the literary

technique juxtaposition effect the story?" Students will then be asked to refer to their

"Once Upon a Time" story and find a sentence or phrase where the author has used this

technique. The students will be asked to share their example of juxtaposition to their

group discussion board and to explain (support their answer), why the author used this

technique in this section of the story.

- **Independent Tasks: - 15 minutes**

  Students will be informed that they will continue to work independently on analyzing and

  annotating the text for other literary techniques that the author uses in her story. The

  students will each be given one of the following literary terms: foreshadowing, irony,

  tone, theme, or symbolism. As with the example on the smart board, each notecard will

  have a literary term, definition, and an accompanying high order question. Students will

  be instructed to find three examples of textual evidence to support their answer.

- **Expert Grouping: - 15 minutes**

  With instruction from the student teacher, students will be instructed to move to their

  expert groups to discuss and collaborate their individual findings with their peers. In this

  group session, each member has the same literary term. Each participant will present

  their information to the group for review. After discussing each group members findings,

  the group will evaluate which three examples of textual evidence best supports the

  definition of the literary term. Each group member will then discuss the high order

  question and use their textual evidence to support their answer. The answer to the

  question will be recorded on each students' discussion board.

- **Presentation Grouping: - 30 – 40 minutes**

Each person will take turns to present their expert findings to the rest of the group

members. During the discussions, every member of the group will annotate their story,

update their annotation key, and record the expert information in their own notes. The

teacher/instructor will monitor progress and evaluate a student's understanding of the

presented information.

- **Summary / Closure: - 10 minutes**

At the end of the presentation groups, every student should have close to the same notes

as one another. Each group will be instructed to turn in one set of notes which will be

typed up in a polished format for the next class period. Students will be asked to remain

in their groups for a whole class review on the lesson. The discussion will be student-

teacher led and questions such as, "Name the literary technique that an author uses to hint

at something that may happen," or "Provide text evidence of how the little boy

symbolizes innocence in the story."

Assessment: Student engagement, collaborating, and acquired knowledge will be primarily

assessed through formative evaluation. Observing the students during group sessions, and asking

high order questions allows the teacher to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity in relation to

learning. At a later date, a summative assessment will take place in the form of a writing task

when students are asked to transfer their analytical skills learned in this lesson to a research

project requiring textual evidence and correct use of literary devices. The research project will be

graded using a writing rubric that can be found below.

Conclusion: According to Tony Bates, "The key point here is that for constructivists, learning is seen as essentially a social process, requiring communication between learner, teacher, and others. This social process cannot effectively be replaced by technology, although technology may facilitate it" (Bates, 2017). However, over a period of time, with technological interventions in all spheres of lives, both collaborative and constructivist approaches proved that they could lead to profound, academic online learning. The amount of knowledge the instructors give online, and the amount of work they put into an understanding of the material for online students in both approaches often compensate for the lack of physical activity. They can also directly support the development of a range of high-level intellectual skills, such as critical thinking, analytical thinking, synthesis, and evaluation through Online Collaborative Learning when students find answers and come to conclusions on their own with the teacher. Constructivism and Online Collaborative Learning influenced more than one study because it is a form of behavior pattern that cannot be referred to pedagogy only. Jean Piaget defined constructivism as an experiential learning. Often the differences of background and skills of learners are what constitutes to collaboration among learners (McLeod, 2015).

Olga Usova
OMDE 610 Section 9041
Assignment 3 - Constructivist or OCL Activity
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Rubric

Criteria	Level 4 90-100 (A)	Level 3 80-90 (B)	Level 2 70-80 (C)	Level 1 Below 70 (F)	Total
Knowledge • Knowledge of literary devices	Shows thorough and insightful understanding of literary devices: juxtaposition, irony, foreshadowing, symbolism, tone, and theme	Shows considerable knowledge of literary devices: juxtaposition, irony, foreshadowing, symbolism, tone, and theme	Shows some understanding of literary devices: juxtaposition, irony, foreshadowing, symbolism, tone, and theme	Lack of understanding of literary devices: juxtaposition, irony, foreshadowing, symbolism, tone, and theme	/4
Thinking • Ability to use appropriate examples	Shows ability to use proper patterns of literary devices in a literary context.	Shows considerable ability to use proper examples of literary devises	Shows understanding of only some literary devices, but not all are in clear instances	Limited ability to use proper examples of literary devices due to lack of understanding how to use them in a context.	/4
Communication • Ability to express ideas clearly during text analysis	Thoroughly expresses ideas in text analysis	Considerable ability to communicate thoughts clearly during text analysis	Some ability to communicate ideas clearly during text analysis but not all explanations are evident.	Limited ability to communicate thoughts clearly during text analysis	/4
Application • Ability to provide a clear, written explanation of each example and relation to device	Clear and logical written explanation of ideas	Considerable ability to explain concepts in a written form	Some ability to explain concepts in written form	Limited ability to articulate concepts in written form.	/4

Grammar Usage • Ability to use spelling and punctuation correctly	Excellent and error-free usage of spelling and punctuation	Mostly correct usage of spelling and punctuation	Some proper use of spelling and punctuation	Limited use of proper spelling and punctuation	/4

TOTAL   /16

References

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