CEP 800
Fall 2011

Name: Amanda Dennison

Grade Level: Kindergarten/Reception 2

Topic: Oral Language: Storytelling on VoiceThread

Content Area: Language Arts

Lesson Schedule: 45 minutes per day for 7 days

Standards:
Standard 4.5: Kinds of Talk and Resulting Genres-Narrative
- Orient the listener to the setting (people, objects and events) using concrete details, transition words and time words
- Build the sequence of events to a climax and comment on how things were resolved
- Independently give a detailed narrative account of an experience in which the actual sequence of numerous events is clear
- Develop characters by portraying themselves as one or by talking about another character's goals and motivations

Instructional Goals:
- The learner will choose a personal narrative to tell.
- The learner will use his/her knowledge of what makes a good story to create his/her personal narrative.
- The learner will use the VoiceThread iPad app to create and share his or her oral story.

Essential Questions:
This mini-unit will be part of a larger study of oral and written storytelling, which uses the following Essential Questions. This mini-unit will mainly focus on the final two essential questions, but will incorporate previous learning from exploration of the first question.

1. What makes a good story?

2. What is my story to share?

3. How can we share our stories?

Rationale:

This unit will not only help students to develop better oral language. It will also equip them with better storytelling skills, which will improve writing content. Additionally, students will experience one way that technology can allow them to create and share stories, through the use of VoiceThread.

Materials:

- Blank paper
- Crayons/markers
- Class set of iPads with VoiceThread app
- Previously-made anchor chart: What makes a good story?"

Lesson Content:

- Day 1
    - Review of Anchor Chart: What makes a good story?
      Teacher: "Boys and girls, we have been discovering what makes a good story. I have the chart here that we have created together. Raise your hand if you can remind us of one of the parts of a good story from our chart?"
      Students: setting, characters, problem, resolution (problem gets fixed), etc.
    - Teacher: "Over the next 7 days, you are going to get to tell your own story that has a setting, characters, a problem, and a resolution. I'm going to tell a story about when I was eating ice cream and the ice cream fell off the cone. Before I could clean it up, my dog ran over and started eating it! Do any of you already have an idea for your story? For this project, you need to chose a real story that actually happened to you, just like I have." Give students time to briefly turn to their partners and discuss story ideas. Get students' attention and choose a few students to share their ideas.
    - Teacher: "One thing that good authors and storytellers do is plan their story before telling it. We can use our fingers to plan our story like this." Teacher models how to tell her story across her fingers and explains to students they will be planning their story on their fingers with their partners. Students work with partners. Students come back to the carpet and teacher chooses a couple of students to share the plans for their stories with the entire class.

- o Teacher: "Tomorrow you will begin making the illustrations for your stories. Who remembers what an illustration is? Tonight, please think about what you want your illustrations to look like based on the plans you made for your story today."

- Day 2
    - o Teacher: "Yesterday you made plans for the story you are going to tell. The next step is to illustrate your story." Model for students remembering each part of your story, as you told it across your fingers yesterday. Explain that students will draw a picture for each part (each finger) of their story. Send students to their seats to get started illustrating. Teacher should circulate and conference with students as they work.

- Day 3
    - o Teacher: "Today is your last day to finish your illustrations for your story. Before you begin your work today, I want you to go through and tell your story again to see which illustrations you need to make today." Model this for students with about half of your illustrations, saying, "See, I still need to draw pictures for the parts of my story where _____ and _____ happened. That is what I will do next." Send students to their seats to work on their illustrations. Teacher should circulate and conference with students as they work.
    - o *Teacher/TA should photograph students' illustrations with iPads after school to prepare for tomorrow's lesson.*

- Day 4
    - o Explain to students that they will be using iPads to record their stories. But first, they need to practice telling their stories with their partner using their illustrations. Model how to do this with the teacher's story. Send students to practice with their partners.
    - o Bring students back to the carpet and show them how to use the VoiceThread app on the iPad. (The iPad should be hooked up so it will project on the board so students can see better.) Model using teacher's story. Play teacher's story for students so they can a complete product.
    - o Discussion: What are different ways we can share our stories? Why would we want to use VoiceThread to share our stories?

- Day 5
    - Pull students in small groups during Literacy Centers to make their stories on VoiceThread.

- Day 6
    - Pull students in small groups during Literacy Centers to make their stories on VoiceThread. Focus on any necessary editing/revising.

- Day 7
    - Pull students in small groups during Literacy Centers to share their stories with their group members. (Stories can also be sent to parents via VoiceThread.)
    - Whole group discussion: Why do we share our stories? Would you use VoiceThread again to make and share a story? What did you like about using VoiceThread to make your story? Is there anything you didn't like?

Common student misconceptions to keep in mind during the unit:

- Students sometimes think it only takes one day to tell or write a story. This may need to be addressed on the first day when students are told how long they will be working on the assignment.

Pedagogy:

This lesson series will have elements of constructivism.   Students will be using and building upon prior knowledge of stories (specifically, what makes a good story) to actively create their own oral storytelling experiences. They will also be working together with partners at times during the process of creating their stories, and then they will share their stories with their group at the end. The teacher and TA will be facilitators in the learning process.

At this age, students have very short attention spans. This is accommodated through mostly active learning activities, interspersed with brief discussions of a reasonable length for this age group. Some students with more significant attentional needs may also need very specific goal setting and reminders as to exactly how much work should be completed in a given amount of time.

A great aspect to VoiceThread is that students are able to create any level of story due to its open-endedness, which will accommodate the needs of the variety of learners in the class. Students can make

stories as simple or complex as they want to meet their own needs and interests. Additionally, struggling writers need not fear the difficulties of writing, as students will only be using pictures and oral language to tell their stories in this unit. VoiceThread also offers the option to type text for the story of students with severe speech difficulties. For students with severe fine motor needs, there is the option of recording only the oral story, without illustrations.

Content & Pedagogy:

In order for students to discover a story to share and learn about sharing stories, they really need to be able to actually do both of those things, not just discuss it or listen to the teacher discuss it. Through this unit, students will activate prior knowledge about what makes a good story to help them create better stories themselves. The only constraint to the unit is the need for adult facilitation when using the VoiceThread app. As a result, students will be working in small groups those days so the teacher and TA will be able to give each student more attention and assistance.

Technology:

Students will be using the VoiceThread app on the school's new class set of iPads. For this unit, the unique role VoiceThread will play is allowing students to revise and keep their oral stories. Without this technology, students can still tell oral stories, but even with illustrations as guides, the stories end up different every time the students tell them. They almost never remember what happened in the story the last time they told it. With VoiceThread, students will be able to save and revise their stories as needed, which will lead to higher quality stories and therefore an enhanced learning experience.

Technology & Pedagogy:

VoiceThread will allow students to actively create their own stories, and then share it with others. This fits with the constructivist theory. VoiceThread does not actually teach students, rather it provides a platform for their learning.

Technology & Content:

Through creating stories on VoiceThread, students will use prior knowledge of what makes a good story to make their own. They will also identify a story of their own that they have to tell. Additionally,

VoiceThread will show students one new way they are able to share stories with others, which will lead to discussions of why we share our stories and what other ways we can share stories.

Assessment:

Students should demonstrate the following understandings in the following ways:

- Basic characteristics of a good story (setting, character(s), problem, resolution). These elements should be present in the stories students create on VoiceThread.
- A story s/he has to share with others. This story should be identified through the planning and creation of the story on VoiceThread.
- Ways we can share our stories and why we would do so. This will be part of small group and whole class discussions.

The teacher will use the following artifacts to determine students' understanding:

- Anecdotal notes from conferences, group discussions, and observations.
- The students' illustrations and stories created on VoiceThread.