

READING WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES

Fostering Student Engagement Video Transcript

Laura Mourino:

You have about six minutes left on your own.

Literacy in math to me is an ability for a child to express their thinking and their problem-solving strategies in multiple formats.

You may refer to your notes if you wish.

Ideally through writing, but if not, through visual representations where they start making connections, and at some point communicating their ideas to me.

You should start really synthesizing your thoughts.

Student:

...beforehand on the sheet right here.

Mourino:

If that's the strategy you want to use, that's absolutely fine. Plan it. That's absolutely fine.

I strongly believe in engagement in the class.

Student:

"You make connections or predict to the reader how you think the class might use the diagram below in the future. How will this relate to my current and future academic lessons?"

Mourino:

Often teachers will express their frustration that not all students are engaged. And I think the major source for engagement is giving a child an opportunity to work the way they like to work. And if they're comfortable in the environment, or if they feel like something has not been imposed on them, but rather they have a choice in it, they're more likely to grasp it and take hold of it.

Each group is going to have a chart. Everybody will have access to a chart. You don't have to put your name on it. So one of them says, "Questions I have." And you're going to write down all the questions you had about this task.

Some of the students were stunted with having to write, because it's such a formal process for them that they can't even begin to get over that hump. Whereas if you have an organizational map or a graphic organizer, it's much easier for them to work. I also believe in modifications in the classroom.

Who would like loose leaf? Who would like a laptop?

I believe that not everybody learns the same way. So some students might need music.

Does anybody feel like they need to listen to their own personal music?

Some students might need to move.

Leo, do you feel like you need more space over there?

Leo:

Oh, no.

Mourino:

Okay.

Some students cannot work well in a time-structured environment. But they need it every once in a while, so that they learn how to manage themselves.

What are you all finding difficult or challenging about this task?

Student:

I feel like we need more time.

Mourino:

Good.

I want them to feel comfortable making mistakes in class.

Elizabeth?

Elizabeth:

There's no, like, information. They just give you the diagram. So you just have to come up with a lot of things to come... like, to write what you have to say.

Mourino:

Is that a complete, correct statement, what Elizabeth just said, that there's no story to it? Who said no? Go ahead, Kevin.

Kevin:

Because yesterday we learned, like to draw in a triangle, and using two trig functions to find, like, the X and the Y on the triangle. So, like, you kind of do know what this is talking about, but, like, you don't know how to explain, like, what's happening.

Mourino:

I want to hear what's everybody's takeaway, which is very different.

Student:

Like why do we have this? How do you connect this to other things?

Mourino:

I want to see how other people interpret what I'm asking for. The way you interpret it is not necessarily the way somebody else interprets it. And I need to appreciate that and honor that so when I plan I can tap into your multiple intelligence.

What would have made this task easier for you? Victoria?

Victoria:

I think maybe more asking a straightforward answer, along with why we have this, or what we feel about it, or what we think about it. Because we weren't really asked the question as to what is the answer to, or how do you solve something. It was more why do we have this question than what's the answer.

Mourino:

So can you give me an example so in the future I can fix my task of a question I could have posed?

Victoria:

Maybe something similar to what we did yesterday, with drawing a triangle with some of the radians, and figuring out something from there, maybe explaining what we see in that triangle.

Mourino:

Thank you. So I'll take that into account in the next task.

I want them to reflect on their own understanding of education and what it means to be educated. Is it okay to ask a question to an adult, and how do I go about asking a question?

Omar:

Are we allowed to, like, skip around?

Mourino:

Yes.

Student:

Okay.

Mourino:

But remember, you're allowed to skip around, absolutely. But if this is in MLA format, there has to be some kind of sequence and structure and logic to it, right? Very good, Omar.

Student:

Most of the questions that I would ask would be clarifying questions.

Mourino:

Most of my class likes to share. They like to exchange ideas. But there are four or five who do not like to share. They're the quiet people. I'm giving you a chance to talk, I'm giving you a chance to bounce ideas off of each other, I'm giving you a debate, I'm giving you a chance to grow and expand your knowledge on this concept. But I'm also allowing you to work alone if that's the only way you like to work.

Student:

We connected this diagram to what we learned yesterday in class.

Mourino:

Excellent.

Basically I'm respecting everybody's way of learning. Good, excellent.