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The effects of critical literacy according to Bloom's taxonomy cognition

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THE EFFECTS OF CRITICAL LITERACY
ACCORDING TO BLOOM'S
TAXONOMY COGNITION

by
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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to accept the hypothesis that kindergarten students who were introduced to critical literacy lessons could learn and increase their higher level thinking skills according to Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition than kindergarten students who were not instructed in critical literacy. The experimental group consisted of fifteen kindergarten students and the control group included eighteen kindergarten students. The demographics of the experimental classroom included seven Caucasian students, six African American students, and two Hispanic students. Five of the students received free lunch. The specific classroom in which the study was performed was a general education kindergarten classroom.

Data was collected through the administration of a pre-test to the experimental group. Then five consecutive critical literacy lessons were implemented. After the competition of the five lessons a post-test was administered to the experimental group as well as the control group who did not receive any critical literacy lessons. A t-test was performed on the data to find out whether the findings were significant or not. It was founded that the findings were significant in all six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of higher level thinking skills, except the last level of evaluation.

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Introduction

Literature is a very important aspect in the education of children today and its use in

elementary schools has increased a great deal in the last two decades. Many times it is not

realized that literature is used in many content areas of the educational curriculum, either as a

necessary tool or an enhancement to a lesson (Serafini, 2000). Although literature is used in the

classroom usually every day, it is not being used to its fullest potential. Many times teachers are

not knowledgeable enough about children's literature to pick and choose the most appropriate

books that will help promote a critical literacy environment (Jongsma, 1995).

Critical literacy is "literacy beyond traditional decoding and encoding of words in order

to reproduce the meaning of text or society until it becomes a means for understanding one's own

history and culture, to recognize connections between one's life and the social structure, to

believe that change in one's life, and the lives of others and society are possible as well as

desirable, and to act on this new knowledge in order to foster equal and just participation in all the

decisions that effect and control our lives." (McDaniel, 2003, p. 3). Teachers who are

knowledgeable about critical literacy are many times afraid to use such radical topics in their

classroom in fear that students will not grasp the topic or the topic will upset the students

(Heffernan, 2000). However, these assumptions are wrong. A critical literacy environment, in

which higher level thinking skills are introduced, pushes children beyond the boundaries of

decoding or encoding words, to the point in which students can critically understand their own selves as well as the social world around them (Jongsma, 1995). Furthermore, teachers have been reluctant to use critical literature to its fullest potential because of their own personal lack of knowledge of abstract ideas and other diverse subject matter. (Schall 2003/04)

Like other perspectives critical literacy has a historical and theoretical aspect as well as a few variations of the meaning of critical literacy in itself. However, the ultimate goal or objective of critical literacy is to provide students with an opportunity to learn about and question the world around them and understand it through personal connections (Jongsma, 1995).

As a result, the key to critical literacy is providing students with the opportunity and skills to question texts in relation to the world around them (McDaniel, 2003). In other words, implementing some type of critical literacy curriculum will hopefully allow the students to become active readers, rather than passive readers. In order for a critical literacy environment to evolve, teachers need to select books that are nontraditional, in that they that provoke the reader to become active, in that the reader forms his/her own interpretations and meanings from the text about their world around them. Many times these books include multicultural themes with topics that have different cultural, historical and political concepts about our world(Crawford, 2000). For so long teachers have been using books as a means to help students learn how to read and write, but it is time for teachers to start using literature as an educative tool to encourage students think critically in addition to understanding the world around them (Serafini, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

The need for a critical literacy curriculum is crucial because there are many sensitive and diverse issues occurring in the world today. Not only do adults see and hear about these sensitive

issues, but so do children. The only difference is that adults have the outlets to read, write and discuss the topics in today's society, while most children do not. Many educators do not talk about these topics because they feel either the children cannot handle discussions about such sensitive issues or educators are simply uncomfortable approaching the topics with children in fear that the subject matter is too abstract (Kauffmann & Schall, 2003). Children are exposed to sensitive topics such as racism, diversity, war, death, homosexuality and much more; just as much, if not more than adults. Children are viewing and reading about the world without any outlets for discussion or conversations with educators. Unfairly, children are typically forced to only discuss and read about the selected or so called 'safe' topics about the world that teachers and parents have pre-selected. This means that most topics about our society are off limits to children in school because we as parents and educators are trying to keep our children safe or sheltered from social problems of our world (Heffernan, 2000). This practice is not good because we do not live in an ideal world and our children are going to eventually grow up without the knowledge base that they really need in order to solve problems. Children are being exposed to these worldly issues through other mediums other than school, which are usually biased or confusing. The urges not to teach these social issues usually result in students forming ignorant decisions and attitudes toward specific sensitive topics. There is no way to avoid having children exposed to the problematic aspects of our culture, so why not let this exposure take place in an educative environment through literature? Providing a critical literacy curriculum will encourage students to problem solve and think critically on their own. So through educating teachers and parents on what critical literacy is and how it affects our teachers and students will hopefully help push the movement of critical literacy (Heffernan2000).

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There is much research that argues for the cause of a critical literacy curriculum to be implemented into the classroom. First there is literature that describes critical literacy's evolution and history. Then the literature on critical literacy begins to unfold to explain the many ways that it is defined and understood. Lastly, there is literature that describes the research that has been documented that relays some of the effects of a critical literacy plan in progress. Then the literature continues to unfold in that it researches the effects that a critical literacy curriculum has on teachers as well as students.

McDaniel (2003), a doctoral candidate and writing instructor at San Diego State University has written an article in hope that teachers and parents will begin to understand what critical literature is, how it has evolved and why it is important to implement into classrooms ("Becoming Critical", 2003). Through his study, McDaniel (2003) gives a really understandable definition of critical literacy. He explains:

> "Critical perspectives [that] push the definition of literacy beyond traditional decoding or encoding of words in order to reproduce the meaning of text or society until it becomes a means for understanding one's own history and culture, to recognize connections between one's life and the social structure, to believe that change in one's life, and the lives of others and society are possible as well as desirable, and to act on this new knowledge in order to foster equal and just participation in all the decisions that affect and control our lives" (McDaniel, 2003, p. 474).

He continues his article describing the steps that teachers need to take in order to promote a critical literacy curriculum. He states that teachers need to be reflective, aware, and honest with themselves in order for critical literacy to be effective (McDaniel, 2003). Last, he gives some suggestions of how to make critical literacy effective, as well as a list of some books that have sensitive topics embedded in their stories.

In his article, *Becoming Critical*, he writes about a study that introduced the concept of critical literacy to teachers. A graduate class of students introduced to elementary teachers the idea of critical literacy and the relationship it has to literature and personal and worldly connections. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate the use of critical literacy through children's literature. The goal of the study was to introduce and provide these teachers with an understanding of the critical literacy theory, in hope that teachers would take their critical literacy experience and build a critical literacy curriculum in their own classrooms. These teachers learned about critical literacy not through a lecture, but through experiencing the process of critical literacy through discussion and activities (Jongsma, 1995).

Heffernan on the other hand, takes a different approach in her article. She describes how she did not know much about critical literacy so she enrolled in a class to learn about it. In this class she conducted research on the effectiveness of critical literacy. First she found that she was afraid to implement such sensitive topics in her classroom because she feared it would be too complex and may upset or confuse her students more than benefit them. However, as she gained a deeper understanding of the perspective and demonstrated the perspective in her third grade classroom, she learned that the idea of critical literacy was effective. She was surprised to find that her students were motivated and excited by the diverse topics that are associated with critical literacy (Heffernan, 2000).

All the researchers mentioned have found that through their research of critical literacy in the classroom students have become more talkative during discussion and have exposed students to the opportunity to form their own opinions and interpretations of the social world around them. As a result, students have gained more of a questioning stance in participating in their

educational experiences. Critical literacy is more than just tools or instructional aides in helping

children learn to read, comprehend and become fluent in the process. This perspective is an

instructional tool to help students learn about the world around them as well as the different

perspectives and interpretations that encompass their world. The researchers mentioned above

prove that through exposure to critical literacy, students have become better problem solvers as

well as more worldly in their educative environment (Serafini, 2000).

Hypothesis

Kindergarten students who are exposed to critical literacy lessons will advance in higher

level thinking skills in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition than kindergarten

students that are not exposed to critical literacy lessons.

Definition of Terms

The following terms listed below were defined for this study:

Critical Literacy – As Freire has defined, critical literacy is how it will be used the study, "Critical literacy views readers as active participants in the reading process and invites them to move beyond passively accepting the text's message to question, examine, or dispute the power relations that exist between readers and authors. It focuses on issues of power and promotes reflection, transformation, and action" (DeVoogd and McLaughlin 2004).

Bloom Taxonomy – The major idea of the taxonomy is that statements of educational objectives can be arranged in a hierarchy of six levels from knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation being the highest. (
An example of the type of questions included Bloom's Taxonomy of each level is available in appendix A.

Participation – In this study participation included every time a student attempted to discuss or answer a question that was proposed. In other words, anytime a student raised his/her hand they were marked as participators. Students who called out were not marked.

Limitation of the Study

As there were many benefits and advantages to this study there were also limitations. In

this particular study, some of the limitations included age, time, and a small population.

The fact that the study was conducted on a kindergarten class was definitely a limitation. The students were in the age group of five and six years old. This meant that the students had a very concrete way of thinking. It was hard and unusual for the children in this age group to understand such abstract topics of critical literacy.

The limitation of age was also relevant because the students were not yet fully matured to understand the seriousness of the test. Maturity also affected the students because they were still easily distracted.

Since the students were so young a test was difficult to construct. The questions on the test were limited to one question per level in Bloom's Taxonomy. Each student answered one question in knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. So, all together, there were six questions total for the students to answer. The limited number of questions administered to test prior and learned knowledge is definitely a limitation.

Another limitation was the small sample population. There were only thirteen students that were included in the sample population. There was a limited amount of subjects because of the classroom size.

Chapter II
Review of the Literature

Introduction

It is important in educating our children to ensure that they are exposed through literature to the realistic view of our world and allowed to discuss and form their own views and perspectives about the world. It is important to give children this opportunity to ensure that children will have a better understanding of the past, present, and future issues and the ability to learn from past mistakes to become better problem solvers in the present and future. Students may also become less prejudice because of the exposure, questioning, and discussions about unfamiliar cultures (Wolk, 2004).

Through research and introduction of critical literacy students will have the opportunity to learn about another world of literature and how to use it to ensure that they are getting the best education available. It is important for educators and children to be exposed to a variety of different teaching theories and the use of critical literacy in the classroom has proved to be beneficial. The exposure to critical literacy is needed to make students well-rounded thinkers in the complex world that they live in and eventually work in (Heffernan, 2000).

By researching and introducing critical literacy will give students the opportunity to learn about another world of literature and how to use it to ensure that they are getting the best education available. It is important for educators and children to be exposed to a variety of different teaching theories and the use of critical literacy in the classroom has proved to be

beneficial. The exposure to critical literacy lessons in the classroom will most likely aid in the creation of well-rounded students in the complex world in which we live (Heffernan, 2000). The objective of this study is to prove that kindergarten students who are exposed to critical literacy lessons will advance in higher level thinking skills in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition than kindergarten students that are not exposed to critical literacy lessons.

Theories and Perspectives of Critical Literacy

There are many different literacy movements and perspectives that have emerged in result of wanting students to be better readers. Critical literacy has gone further than wanting better readers. Critical literacy not only wants to produce better readers, but more well rounded, reflective, problem solving readers. In order for the public and educators to know and understand critical literacy it is necessary that a little information about each movement and perspective to be known. Furthermore, knowledge of all the movements and perspectives shed light on the importance of critical literacy (McDaniel, 2003).

As educators are informed about the use of critical literacy and its importance in education, there are many different reactions and opinions, both positive and negative that affects the progression of the movement and the way that teachers teach literature (McDaniel, 2003)

As educators do begin to implement the critical literacy perspective in their classrooms, students are also effected (McDaniel, 2003)

As a result of the observations in that teachers and students are affected by the critical literacy movement, the literature review to follow will first include background information on literacy and the emergence of critical literacy. Next the review will examine studies that have researched the effects that critical literacy has had on educators as well as students.

In modern-day society things change and evolve very rapidly. Fads and fashions change and evolve just as well as educational perspectives and techniques. Critical literacy is a fairly new concept that has recently evolved. However to better understand the evolution of the critical literacy theory, it is necessary to understand the definition of literacy (McDaniel, 2003). According to Jongsma's (1995) definition, literacy is the ability to read and write in the context of using the alphabet to form words, as well as the ability to find and decode symbols that are embedded in society.

However, today this definition of literacy is beginning to change. Today literacy is being taken one step further to the inclusion of a critical perspective association with literacy. Nevertheless, this critical literacy movement did not just evolve. There is a long past to the evolution of critical literacy (McDaniel, 2003).

Cadiero-Kaplan and Smith (2002) explained that in the past literacy was functional. By this, they mean that literacy provided an individual the opportunity to read and write in order to function in society. Eventually a literacy movement began to evolve, which became known as the cultural literacy movement. This movement emphasized literacy with learning morals and values with no relevance to individual experiences. Next, the progressive literacy movement evolved which was in all reality a liberal idealology. This movement focused the student, but at the same time failed to examine cultural, historical and political questions, which critical literacy evolved to accomplish (McDaniel, 2003).

All three of the perspectives mentioned above helped ignite the evolution of critical literacy. To make it easy the three movements combined into one movement is what critical literacy is made up of. However, the evolution of critical literacy continues with Paole Freire, who

was previously a Brazilian lawyer, who eventually end up becoming a teacher. He developed a

revolutionary pedagogy, in which he began to educate poor peasants in Sao Paolo, Brazil. He

began having discussions with the peasants, with eventually lead to problem-solving solutions to

their homelessness. Freire eventually introduced written words into the discussions. The fact that

Freire let the peasants discuss and analyze their situation became very popular among other

schools (Temple, 1999). Many schools have implemented a student-centered curriculum(

McDaniel, 2003). "Traditional teacher-centered curriculums did not teach students to think for

themselves."(Temple 1999 p. 3) Freire's number one goal for education was to enable students to

question and analyze their world (Temple, 1999).

To sum up the definition of critical literacy, Freire explains that critical literacy, "... starts

from the premise that language is always used in some context that includes power relationship."

(Temple, 1999, p. 3) Furthermore, he explains that all texts are written for a purpose. It is the

readers job to decode what they believe from the text. This is what Freire says that critical

literacy is all about (Temple 1999, p.4).

Patrick Shannon, a professor of education at Pennsylvania State University, gives a very

detailed yet understandable definition of what critical literacy is. First of all Shannon explains that

the development of critical literacy is a result of a critical view on reality. He continues to define

critical literacy as political, in which "it asks you to consider the politics of the authors you read

and to decide whose side you are on when you write" (Jongsma, 1995, p. 1). He continues to

explain critical literacy as venturing beyond the traditional decoding aspects of literacy to looking

for meaning in a text that has relevance to the reader.

Shannon also explains critical literacy as "... reproduce[ing] the meaning of text and

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society until it becomes a means for understanding one's own history and culture and their connection to current social structure, and for fostering an activism toward equal participation for all the decisions that effect and control our lives." (Jongsma, 1995, p.1)

Moreover, Shannon explains critical literacy movement as "literacy beyond traditional decoding and encoding of words in order to reproduce the meaning of text or society until it becomes a means for understanding one's own history and culture, to recognize connections between one's life and the social structure, to believe that change in one's life, and the lives of others and society are possible as well as desirable, and to act on this new knowledge in order to foster equal and just participation in all the decisions that effect and control our lives" (McDaniel, 2003, p.480).

As there are different movements that lead to critical literacy, there are also a couple of perspectives that precedes the critical perspective's theory. First there is the modernist perspective. This perspective's belief is that meaning resides in the text and that reading is for the purpose of decoding and comprehending. As a result of this perspective, literature is merely to help students learn to read (Serafini, 2000).

Another perspective, the transactional is where the reader interacts with the text. In other words, the reader makes personal connections with the text. In this theory, literature is used as a vehicle for learning language. This theory is a lead-in to the critical perspective.
Like the transactional perspective the critical perspective also involves the reader to interact and make connections with the text. However, the critical perspective takes literacy another step further in that it helps the reader understand how different meanings are constructed through culture, history, and politics (Serafini, 2000).

All these perspectives are important to critical literacy. Without these perspectives, critical literacy may have never evolved. Without the modernist theory of encoding and decoding, people may have never learned how to read. And, without the transactional theory, readers may have stayed passive readers and never progressed to active readers who can make both personal and worldly connections to the text they read (Serafini, 2000).

Both the perspectives and the movements are important to understand before an educator could understand, develop and implement a critical literacy curriculum into a classroom. After these perspectives and movements are understood the critical literacy theory is easier to understand and eventually develop and implement into the classroom (Serafini, 2000).

The idea of critical literacy is sometimes difficult to understand because there is no concrete or simple definition of the term. Many educators and researchers have come up with many terms and interpretations of what critical literacy means. However, all the educators and researchers agree on the purpose of critical literacy to:

> "... offer students the knowledge, skills, and values they will need to critically negotiate and transform the world in which they find themselves. The politics of critical literacy and cultural differences engages rather than retreats from those problems that make democracy massy, vibrant, and noisy" (McDaniel, 2003, p. 475).

Implementing Critical Literacy

The first step to implement a critical literacy curriculum in the schools is to educate teachers on what it is and how it works (Becoming Critical, 2003).

One study called *Becoming Critical* researched the introduction of the concept of critical literacy to teachers. A graduate class of students introduced to elementary teachers the idea of critical literacy and the relationship it has to literature and personal and worldly connections

(*Becoming Critical,* 2003). The purpose of the study was to demonstrate the use of critical literacy through children's literature. The goal of the study was to introduce and provide these teachers with an understanding of the critical literacy theory. Furthermore, this study encouraged elementary teachers to take their critical literacy experience and build a critical literacy curriculum in their classrooms. These teachers learned about critical literacy not through a lecture, but through experiencing the process of critical literacy through discussion and activities. First teachers were given professional literature on the subject to read. Next teachers engaged in conversation about children's books they were asked to read. Through these conversations, the teachers began to understand the different political, historical, and cultural structures that are embedded in children's literature. Eventually these teachers began to construct meaning about critical literacy and started making personal connections to the text and consequently worldly connections were made through the text (*Becoming Critical,* 2003).

Altogether, through this research experiment of the introduction of critical literacy to elementary teachers, these elementary teachers have the learned what critical literacy is and how important it is in order for students to begin to make connections with texts. Consequently, they have learned that in order to develop and implement a critical literacy curriculum in their own classrooms, they need to reconsider the books they chose to use in their classrooms, as well as the activities and discussions they create to correspond with the books (*Becoming Critical,* 2003).

Another study conducted by a third grade English teacher wanted to find a way to create more critical readers and writers. As a result, she enrolled in a class called *Literacies and Differences.* In this course she learned how to use and discuss children's literature interrelated with social problems. At first she felt that the texts with sensitive topics would upset children,

however after gaining a deeper understanding of critical literacy she decided to experiment in her classroom to see if critical literacy really works. Through her experiment she learned that her ignorant assumptions were wrong. Her realization of the importance of critical literacy occurred when she read a radical piece of literature to her third grade English students. The text was a story about slavery told through the eyes of a little girl who was an African American slave. The book includes very vivid and detailed descriptions of the horrors of slavery. This elementary book even includes the horrible word *nigger*. Shocking enough, the students were able to handle the topics introduced by the literature and more interesting, the students seemed to be more interested and motivated to participate in class. The students were able for the first time to make connections with the text and their personal lives and the world around them. An example of one student's personal connection to the text was the example of how some students tease others. One world connection made by a student was the Jasper, Texas incident, in which an African American man was killed by three white men. This particular student learned about this incident on television. So students are being exposed to these sensitive topics whether teachers and parents like it or not. So doesn't it make sense to educate children on these sensitive topics in a school setting through literature before they learn the topics from television or other mediums. In school teachers are able to teach and encourage students to understand sensitive topics and ask any questions they may, have where as television doesn't provide such an outlet and may leave students confused and frustrated (Heffernan, 2000).

Through this lesson the teacher realized that there is a status quo for teachers to teach only safe books, books that don't depict controversial issues and have happy endings. The excuse for teaching only safe books is said to be to protect the children from sensitive topics that they

cannot handle. However, the educators are harming the students because they are not depicting reality as it really is. The books that traditional teachers are exposing children to, do not prepare students for the hardships and obstacles of the past, present and future. It is important for students to learn about sensitive topics, and the best way to accomplish this goal is through literature. If students don't learn about these topics in school, then they will see it or learn it somewhere else where it may not be depicted in a non bias, non ignorant way. Even if information is portrayed in an unbiased way, students still have no outlet to ask questions to clear up any misconceptions (Kauffmann & Schall, 2003).

Traditional books need not be abandoned. Teachers can still use traditional books to promote critical literacy. However, higher learning questions need to be implemented to encourage higher level thinking and learning. For an example, if a teacher decides to use the traditional book Cinderella in her critical literacy lesson, higher thinking questions need to be used. Questions that promote critical literacy for this particular story would include:

What if Cinderella did not marry the prince?

How would the book be different if an African American wrote it?

Does the book portray the reality of our world? (Kauffmann & Schall, 2003)

As studies have found that teachers haven't jumped on the critical literacy bandwagon because they thought topics to be too sensitive for students or the questioning to be too hard, the studies have also found that teachers are hesitant to use critical literacy with such sensitive topics because parents and administrators would not support or approve the theory. However, if parents are informed and educated on the critical literacy theory along with teachers, parents would not be so ignorant and would approve the implementation of critical literacy in the

classroom. (Kauffmann & Schall, 2003)

Effects of Critical Literacy on Teachers and Students

As teachers are affected by the introduction of critical literacy so are their students. For the last thirty years many researchers have studied the effects that literature and the implementation of critical literacy have on students (Rogers, 1999). In L. Heffernan's (2000) article, *Taking the First Steps Toward Critical Literacy,* she describes a study she did, in which she introduced third grade students to a provocative text about slavery. As a result of this introduction to critical literacy and the provocative text, students proved to be more interested in the book. After reading the book students seemed to have more to say in discussion than usual (Heffernan, 2000). The results continued to show that when students were introduced to provocative texts, conversions and discussions seemed to be more lengthy and deep. More important, "Students were not traumatized they were engaged and serious as they talked about slavery and racism." (Heffernan, 2000, p. 4) Throughout Heffernan's study, her class discussed more than twenty social issue texts and the students prove to have opinions and feelings about topics that most adults though to be too complex and sensitive for young children. When students first began discussing the social issues in the texts they were only able to make personal connections, but as the critical literacy agenda continued they began to make more worldly connections. So for an example, the students progressed from talking about the teeth they lost to the murders at Columbine High School in Colorado (Heffernan, 2000).

During one discussion Heffernan pointed out to students that some adults felt that some of the topics they were talking about were too upsetting for students. The students seemed offended and remarked that they already know about the topics through television, newspapers and the

internet (Heffernan, 2000).

Another study researched by Janine Schall, a doctoral student in the Department of
Language and Gloria Kauffmann, a multi-age teacher and an adjunct professor at the University of
Arizona, sheds more light onto what the effects are of students learning in a critical literacy
curriculum with the use of sensitive literature. These two researchers decided to bring the
controversial topic of gays and lesbians into their classroom. The teachers brought books with
gay and lesbian characters into the classroom and recorded how the students responded. The
main goal of this research project was to learn from this research to plan for future critical literacy
curriculums and attempt to have students to take actions against discrimination. After a few
discussions, students began to feel comfortable speaking freely about their thoughts and opinions
on the topic of gay people. Not only were the students more comfortable about speaking their
opinions, but they began to also think about other people's opinions and take them into
consideration. The researchers also noticed that most of the discussions prompted and led to
more questions that did not usually occur in other subject areas of the curriculum. Altogether, the
researchers were surprised at how seriously the students took the discussions (Kauffmann &
Schall, 2003).

Chapter III
Design of the Study

Introduction

In this day and age there are many social problems and not enough solutions. Today our educational system is largely focused and geared toward teaching students for the standardized tests (Wolk, 2004). However, when you look at the problems in the world, are test scores really the answer to the problems. Test scores are not going to solve the problems of illiterate citizens, overpopulated prisons, increasing poverty, racism and many more problems that are too many to even attempt to mention (Wolk, 2004). The solution to the problem is to educate the children in a way that they are prepared to problem solve, or in other words, help to solve our worldly problems. Kindergarten students who are exposed to critical literacy lessons will advance in higher level thinking skills in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition than kindergarten students that are not exposed to critical literacy lessons. However, before educators can start using critical literacy in the classroom, they need to make sure they understand the theory of critical literacy, how to implement it, and the effects it has on students.

This chapter will explain the procedure of the study. This chapter will describe the context of the research study along with information about the data collection instruments and the procedure of the data collection process.

Sample

The study was conducted in a small elementary school in a southern New Jersey township.

The town was made up of a variety of different ethnic groups. According to the online Wikipedia encyclopedia, in 2000 the town was made up of about 78% of Caucasians, 18% African Americans, 1% of Asians, and 4% of Hispanics or Latinos. The medium income for a family was 50, 040 dollars per year. About 6% of the population was living below poverty lines. The children that attended the elementary school came from these demographics. There were a variety of students that came from different ethnic and economic backgrounds.

The school contained grades pre-kindergarten through grade five. The experimental group consisted of fifteen kindergarten students and the control group included eighteen kindergarten students. The classroom was a regular education room, however, two students were classified. One of the students was classified as a physically impaired. The other classified student was classified as Other Health Impairments (OHI). These particular students were diagnosed from birth with a physical impairments. However, the diagnoses affected the students' physical abilities only, but not their academic abilities directly.

The demographics of the classroom were made up of seven Caucasian students, six African American students, and two Hispanic students. Five of the students received free lunch. The specific classroom in which the study was performed in was a general education kindergarten classroom. The teacher was very positive, and compassionate. She was dual certified and had been teaching kindergarten for six years. For the fifteen years previous to her kindergarten position in the district she taught preschool disabled.

In addition to the teacher in the classroom, there were also three other adults present. There was a one-on-one aide for one student, there was another one-on-one nurse aide for another student, as well as an instructional aide for the whole classroom. This particular classroom had a

lot of extra hands to aid the students in achieving the best education possible.

The teaching style of the classroom teacher correlated with the theory critical literacy.

Procedure

Before data collection, it was necessary to organize a preliminary idea of how to conduct the study with such young learners. Before lessons on critical literacy were able to be developed, a means of assessing the students' higher level thinking skills had to be developed. There was no kindergarten commercial test that tested the specific higher level thinking skills of Bloom's Taxonomy. A test was made to assess the specific skills at the kindergarten level. The test was an appropriate assessment tool based on Bloom's Taxonomy of higher level thinking. Starter questions from Bloom's Taxonomy were used to guide in the development of each stage of thinking at a higher level. An example of the starter questions for each level is available in appendix A. Since the students were not yet writers, the test required the students to draw their answers. Adults in the classroom had to circulate around the room for each question and asked the students what they drew. The adults had to then write down what the child said. A book was also read to the students before the pre-test and the post-test was implemented. Only one question for each step of higher level thinking was administered on the assessment because of the young age of the subjects. Because of the student age level, the students had a short attention span. (appendix B)

The next step of data collection consisted of acquiring permission from parents and administrators. First the administrators and parents were informed of the purpose of the study. Next, a permission letter to conduct the study was signed by the superintendent of the school. (appendix C) This included explaining critical literacy and its proposes effects. Next the informing process consisted of explaining the plan of implementation of the research. Lastly, a permission

slip was given to parents to sign and return to allow their children to participate in the study. (appendix D)

The next step in the procedure in planning to collect data included the development of critical literacy lessons. Since only a week was allotted to the implementation of the research study, the lessons were very detailed. Parts of the lessons and the children's literature chosen for the study were suggestions from the book "Critical Literacy" by Maureen McLaughlin and Glenn L. DeVoogd. (appendix E)

The first part of the plan for implementation for the study included a pre-test experimental group to assess students' level of higher thinking skills. When students took the test, the instruction aides and the teacher circulated the room and wrote down student answers.

Next, lessons were implemented in the course of a consecutive week. The first day, included the pre-assessment, and afterwards the critical literacy lesson was taught. Over the next four days, a critical literacy lesson was implemented each day during the forty-five minutes allotted for language arts.

Lastly, a post-test was administered to both the control group and the experimental group. The experimental group took the post-test directly after the five days of implemented critical literacy lessons. The control group took the test without any critical literacy lessons administered.

During each lesson, the instructional aide in the classroom kept a tally of student participation. A class roster was given to the aide in the classroom. Every time a student raised their hand during a critical literacy lesson a mark was put next to their name to track how many times the child attempted to participate. The aide put tally marks next to each student as they raised their hand, whether they orally answered or not. Students who called out were not marked

with a participation mark.

Observation of how the students reacted and responded to the critical literacy lessons and questions were also noted by the teacher.

Description of the Instrument

The instrument included six questions in total, one question for each of the six levels of Bloom's higher level thinking skills. The levels correlated with Bloom's Taxonomy, the first question was a knowledge question, the second was a comprehension question, the third was an application question, the fourth was an analysis question, the fifth was synthesis, and the sixth was an evaluative question. Each question was graded individually. If the answer was correct, the student received a hundred for that level of Bloom's Taxonomy of cognition. When a student answered a question incorrectly, they received a zero for that level of Bloom's Taxonomy of cognition. The analysis question of the test had a three-part answer, so if the student got one of the three answers, they received a 33%, if the student got two of the three answers they received a 66%.

Chapter IV
Analysis of Findings

Introduction

Higher level thinking skills are a crucial element of surviving and becoming successful in society. Through teaching our students to think on higher and more critical levels prepares them for the problem solving issues that society endures. Not only does such thinking skills prepare students for the imperfect independence of the society, it also prepares them for higher education.

This study that was conducted over the course of a week gives evidence that students at even a young level as kindergarten can begin to grasp and use some of the critical literacy thinking skills. The implementation of critical literacy lessons into a classroom could eventually lead to a critical literacy classroom. This study gives evidence that young students have the ability to learn more abstract ideas of thinking skills.

Analysis Related to Particular Purpose of the Hypothesis

The study accepts the hypothesis that kindergarten students who are exposed to critical literacy lessons will advance in higher level thinking skills in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy of cognition than kindergarten students that are not exposed to critical literacy lessons.

Before actually looking at the significance of the study, it is important to compare the results of the students' pre-tests and post-tests in each level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Bloom's first level in his taxonomy is knowledge. Table 1 shows the knowledge pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group. The first column shows the possible scores that the students could have

received. The second column shows the frequency of times that grade was received for the pre-test. The third column shows the percentage of students that received that grade for the pre-test. The fourth column shows the frequency of times that the grade was received for the post-test. The last column shows the percentage of students that received that grade for the post-test.

table 1

Knowledge Pre-test and Post-test Test Table

Scores	Pre-test Frequency	Pre-test Percent	Post-test Frequency	Post-test Percent
0	2	13.3	5	33.3
50	1	6.7	-	-
100	12	80.0	10	67.7
total	15	100.0	15	100.0

Table 2 shows the experimental group's comparisons of the pre-test and post-test of the next level of Bloom's Taxonomy, which is comprehension. The scores section explains the possible scores the students could have received for the tests. The pre-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score. The post-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score.

table 2

Comprehension Pre-test and Post-test Table

Scores	Pre-test Frequency	Pre-test Percent	Post-test Frequency	Post-test Percent
0	8	53.3	4	26.7

100	7	46.7	11	73.3
total	15	100.0	15	100.0

Table 3 shows the experimental group's comparisons of the pre-test and post-test of the third level of Bloom's Taxonomy, which is application. The scores section explains the possible scores the students could have received for the tests. The pre-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score. The post-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score.

table 3

Application Pre-test and Post-test Table

Scores	Pre-test Frequency	Pre-test Percent	Post-test Frequency	Post-test Percent
0	8	53.3	6	40.0
100	7	46.7	9	60.0
total	15	100.0	15	100.0

Table 4 shows the experimental group's comparisons of the pre-test and post-test of the fourth level of Bloom's Taxonomy, which is analysis. The scores section explains the possible scores the students could have received for the tests. The pre-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score. The post-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score.

table 4

Analysis Pre-test and Post-test Table

Scores	Pre-test Frequency	Pre-test Percent	Post-test Frequency	Post-test Percent
0	1	6.7	2	13.3
33	1	6.7	1	6.7
50	1	6.7	-	-
66	8	53.3	10	66.7
100	4	26.7	2	13.3
total	15	100.0	15	100.0

Table 5 shows the experimental group's comparisons of the pre-test and post-test of the fifth level of Bloom's Taxonomy, which is synthesis. The scores section explains the possible scores the students could have received for the tests. The pre-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score. The post-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score.

table 5

Synthesis Pre-test and Post-test Table

Scores	Pre-test Frequency	Pre-test Percent	Post-test Frequency	Post-test Percent
0	9	60.0	5	33.3
100	6	40.0	10	66.7
total	15	100.0	15	100.0

Table 6 shows the experimental group's comparisons of the pre-test and post-test of the fifth level of Bloom's Taxonomy, which is synthesis. The scores section explains the possible scores the students could have received for the tests. The pre-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students

who received that score. The post-test frequency section shows how many times that score was received. The pre-test percent section shows the percentage of students who received that score.

table 6

Evaluative Pre-test and Post-test Table

Scores	Pre-test Frequency	Pre-test Percent	Post-test Frequency	Post-test Percent
0	15	100.0	14	93.3
100	-	-	1	6.7
total	15	100.0	15	100.0

Table 7 is the results from the actual t-test. This table shows that all levels of the testing proved to be statically significant except for the evaluative level of Bloom's Taxonomy of cognition. The first column is the test that was administered. The second column is how many subjects the test was administered to. The last column is the significance of the study. For the last column, numbers that are between 0 and .05 show the particular test was significant. Looking at the numbers, all the tests show to be significant except the last test, which is the evaluative test in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy of cognition.

table 7

t-test Table

Test	Subjects	Significance
Knowledge pre-test	15	.000
Knowledge post-test	15	.000
Comprehension pre-test	15	.004
Comprehension post-test	15	.000
Application pre-test	15	.004
Application post-test	15	.000
Analysis pre-test	15	.000

Analysis post-test	15	.000
Synthesis pre-test	15	.009
Synthesis post-test	15	.000
Evaluative post-test	15	.334

Chapter V
Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Literature is a tool that is being used in the classroom everyday. It is important that literature is used to its fullest potential. Students must be able to read fluently, but at the same time critically understand what they are reading in the content areas of reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, and other educational subject matters, in order to advance and progress to the fullest in their educational career (Jongsma 1995)The ultimate goal of critical literacy is to provide students with the opportunity to learn about and question the world around them through the literature they encounter. In other words, critical literacy's objective is to provide students with the higher level thinking skills that are necessary to advance in today's society. (Jongsma, 1995) Through Bloom's Taxonomy of cognition, the ability to test whether these skills are being taught in the classroom become available.

Summary of the Problem

Through the researchers experience as a student, as well as, a pre-service teacher she observed the dilemma of teachers only teaching students the comprehension aspect of reading. There is a lot more to reading than just comprehension and fluency. Bloom's Taxonomy is a great model of how to expand the skills of reading from just knowledge and comprehension. Bloom's Taxonomy describes the skills of knowledge and comprehension, but also continues to build on other skills of higher level thinking, such as, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. These

skills apply to reading and can also be used across content areas.

In the researcher's opinion, it is crucial to be able to think and read from a critical stance. Not only does teaching critical literacy enhance a student's reading skills, it also increases the student's ability to a problem solve.

Summary of the Hypothesis

The hypothesis that kindergarten students who are exposed to critical literacy lessons will advance in higher level thinking skills in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition than kindergarten students that are not exposed to critical literacy lessons has been accepted in accordance with the research presented in this particular study.

Summary of the Procedure

Before the study could begin to be implemented, it was necessary for the researcher to gain permission from the school and the parents of the children that were the subjects. The next step was to pretest the experimental group. The next process was to develop and implement critical literacy lessons that were appropriate from the age group of the students. Lastly, a post-test was necessary to administer to both the control and experimental in order to find out whether the students in the experimental group advanced or increased their higher level thinking skills as a result of implementation of critical literacy lessons.

The tracking of the participation of students was also monitored to observe whether student participation is increased through critical literacy lessons.

Summary of the Findings

It was founded that both the experimental and control groups were on the same levels of higher level thinking skills. Both groups were either at Bloom's Taxonomy of cognition's first

level of knowledge or in his second level of comprehension. After the critical literacy lessons were implemented to the experimental group and the post-test was administered, the test proved that the lessons did increase the students' level of thinking. The students increased in all six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of higher level thinking skills except the last level of evaluation. In other words, the study proved to be accepted. The students increased their higher level thinking skills in knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, and synthesis. Although students did not show a significant difference in the evaluative stage did not affect the significance of the study.

Recommendations

When the study is conducted again, it is recommended that a pre-test be administered to the control group as well as the experimental group. This alteration will give the study more validity.

The next time the study is performed, it would be a good idea to compare the difference in scores between the males and females. However, if this were to be done than it would require more subjects than required for the original study.

When further research is done, a longer time period of implementing critical literacy lessons may lead to even more significant results. If a longer period of time is allotted to instructing critical literacy lessons, all of Bloom's stages of higher level thinking may become significant, including his last stage of evaluation.

Lastly, it would be interesting to conduct this test after implementing critical literacy lessons in another subject area, such as, science or social studies. Such a study would require that the pre-test and post-test to be developed to test the students' content knowledge in the subject area. This study could be conducted in any subject where reading is done. Not only would this

alteration of the study show whether there was an increase in higher level thinking skills, it would also show if the increased their knowledge in the subject matter.

Implications

This study implies that students' higher level thinking skills according to Bloom's Taxonomy will increase when critical literacy lessons and instruction are implemented into the classroom. The study also gives evidence that kindergarten students have the ability to grasp higher level thinking skills. The study also has given evidence that classroom participation was raised and students were willing to give opinions as the lessons progressed throughout the week. This study accepted the concept of higher level thinking is not too abstract for kindergarten students to understand.

This study is important in educating our children to ensure that they are exposed through literature to the realistic view of our world and allowed to discuss and form their own views and perspectives about the world. It is important to give children this opportunity to ensure that children have a better understanding of the past, present, and future issues. With this understanding, children will be able to learn from pat mistakes and become better problem solvers in the present and future. Students may also become less prejudice because of the exposure, questioning, and discussions about unfamiliar cultures (Wolk, 2004).

There are many social problems without solutions and giving students the exposure to these issues will help them be better able to come up with solutions in their adulthood (Wolk 2004).

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Appendix A
Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognition

The Bloom Taxonomy of Cognition

Level 1

Knowledge- Students obtain answers to questions directly from information presented.

Question Starters:
What is...?
How is ...?
Where is ....?
When did .... happen ?
How did.... happen ?
Who.....?
Define....?
Explain...?

Level 2

Comprehension-Students organize and select facts and ideas in material by giving descriptions, stating the main ideas or comparing.

Question Starters:
Describe....?
What is the main idea of.... .?
Interpret or put in your own words....?
Compare....?
How are..... alike/different?
Discuss....
Clarify......
What can you say about......?
Which is the best answer.....?
Which comes first, ...or............?
Arrange the .... in order.
Why did........?

Level 3

Application- Students solve problems using acquired knowledge or application of facts, techniques or rules.

Question Starters:
How can you use.....?
Find an example of ....?
Solve......... using what you have learned.
Organize .... to show............
Show your understanding of ....by........

Level 4

Analysis-Students analyze constituent elements by identifying motives or causes, making inferences, and finding evidence to support generalizations.

Question Starters:
What are the parts or features of......?
Classify/Categorize.......?
How is........related to.............?
Outline.......
Why do you think.........?
Diagram........
Identify........
List........
Delineate.......
Infer..........
What evidence can you find to............?
What does.......tell us about............?

Level 5

Synthesis-Students combine ideas in unique ways such as solving problems, making predictions, or producing original communications.

Question Starters:
How can we solve.....?
If you had.........how would you ....?
How can we improve..........?
What will happen if..........?
Suppose you could ....?
Combine.......
What is another way........?
Design a new use for.........
Create.......
Adapt......
Invent......
Design a new.......
Elaborate........
Modify........

Level 6

Evaluate-Students present opinions, judge the validity of ideas or quality of work.

Question Starters:
Why do you think........?
Do you agree.........?
What is your opinion of......?
Prove/disprove that..... is better then.......?
Prioritize...
Assess the value or importance of
Would it be better if..........?

Appendix B
Pre-test Post-test of Higher Level Thinking Skills

Knowledge

1. Draw something that you can remember that happened in the story?

Comprehension

2. Draw which comes first? (Give two choices.)

Application

3. Draw something in the story that reminds you of home?

Analysis

4. Classify each character in the story as either nice or mean
Under the nice face draw nice characters.
Under the mean face draw mean characters.

Synthesis

5. If you had the same problem as the
   the main character, how would
   you solve the problem differently?
   Draw your answer.

Evaluate

6. Why do you think the book was
   important to read and learn about?
   Draw your answer.

Appendix C
Letter to Elementary School for Permission to Conduct Research

To Whom It May Concern:

I grant permission to Jennifer Virelli to conduct research on a study about critical literacy and the effects it has on student participation, motivation and higher level thinking skills. Dr. Robinson, Elementary/Early Childhood Education Department, Rowan University will supervise this study.

The purpose of the study is to observe and test whether critical literacy lessons raise the participation rate, motivation, and higher level thinking skills of students. The data collected in this study will be combined with data from previous studies and will be submitted for publication in a research journal.

I grant permission for the investigator to collect data through observations pre and post tests of higher level thinking skills. This data collection will exceed no more than one hour for each participant.

I understand that there will be children involved in the data collection that will not exceed the limits of observation. I understand that all responses will be anonymous and that all the data gathered will be confidential. I agree that any information obtained from this study may be uses in any way thought best for publication or education provided and that in no way will participants be identified and names will not be used.

I understand that there are no physical or psychological risks involved in this study, and that I am free to withdraw my permission at any time without penalty.

Dr. Kenneth P. Koczur
(Please Print Name)

_____   _3/24/06_
(Signature of Administrator)   (Date)

_____   _3/24/06_
(Signature of Investigator)   (Date)

Appendix D
Letter to Parents of Subjects for Permission to Include their Child in the Study

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am a graduate student in the collaborative education program at Rowan University. I will be conducting a research project under the supervision or Dr. Robinson as part of my master's thesis concerning the effects of critical literacy lessons in the classroom. I am requesting permission for your child to participate in the research. The goal of the study is to determine whether critical literacy lessons raise the participation, motivation, and higher level thinking skills of students.

I will be observing class participation, as well as, student motivation during implemented critical literacy lessons. I will also test students' ability of higher level thinking skills after two different read alouds. During this time I will look for the percentage of student participation, motivation and higher level thinking skills. There will be no need to isolate any students on an individual basis.

Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate in this study will have absolutely no effect on your child's standing in his/her class. If you choose to give permission for your child to participate in this study, you can withdraw your child from the study at any time. At the conclusion of the study, a summary of the group results will be made available to all interested parents. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at (609) 548-1498 or rosado39@students.rowan.edu. You may also contact Dr. Robinson at robinson@rowan.edu. Thank You

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Virelli

Please indicate whether or not you wish to have your child participate in this study by checking the appropriate statement below and returning this letter to your child's teacher.

_____ I grant permission for my child _____ to participate in this study.

_____ I do not grant permission for my child _____ to participate in this study.

(Parent/Guardian signature)   (Date)

Appendix E
Critical Literacy Lessons and Lesson Plan Bibliography

Critical Literacy Lessons
Lesson #1

Objective:
> SWAT complete a pre-assessment and realize that there are other perspectives in a story.

New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards:
> 3.1E, G, 3.2D, 3.3A, 3.5A

Prior Knowledge:
> Students will already have completed a story map on the story "The Three Little Pigs". In results, students will already be familiar with the characters and events in the story.

Anticipatory Set:
> The students will be given the pre test to assess where the students are in higher level thinking skills. The book will be read to the students after the assessment for the second time.

Input and Modeling:
> At this time the teacher will explain to the students that there are multiple perspectives in a story. The teacher will use the example that when fighting with a sibling, sometimes your sibling tells your mother a different side to the story than yourself. The same things happen in books.

Guided Practice:
> As a class, list the characters on the board and ask the students to guess how each character feels. Ask the students:
> - Is the wolf a bad character or a good character?
> - Do the three little pigs think the wolf is a bad character or a good character?
> - Does the wolf think he's a bad character?
> - Why do you think the wolf blew the little pigs houses down?
> - So is the wolf a bad or good character.
> - Remind the students that the three little pigs cooked the wolf. Then ask the students if the pigs are good characters or bad characters?

Independent Practice:
> Have students discuss with each other if there is a right or wrong answer to the questions in the guided practice section. The teacher should allow the discussion to be students centered; however, facilitating will be necessary for such young learners.

Closure:
> Ask the students why it is important to think about all the characters and their side of the same story? Bring up the example of two arguing siblings explaining their situation to their mother? Why is it important for the mother to hear what both kids have to say about the situation?

Evaluation:
> The teacher will observe the lesson and mark off participation.

Lesson 2

Objective: SWAT differentiate between two different perspectives.

New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards:

 3.1E, G, 3.2D, 3.3A, 3.5A

Prior Knowledge:

 Students will have already read "The Three Little Pigs". The students have also done a story map of "The Three Little Pigs". The students will have already done a reacting of "The Three Little Pigs". Lastly in yesterday's previous lesson, students will have had a discussion about the good and bad characters in each story.

Anticipatory Set:

 Bring students to the carpet. Have a discussion with the students about the tradition story of "The Three Little Pigs". Ask the students

- Who talked in "The Three Little Pigs"?
- Who was the good guys and who was the bad guy?
- Whose side is the author on?
- Do the pigs ever talk to the wolf about how they feel?
- What was the problem in the story?
- What do you think the wolf would say if the pigs talked to the wolf about the problem?

Modeling:

 Read the "True Story of the Three Little Pigs". Then begin a Venn diagram as a class comparing the tradition story of "The Three Little Pigs" and "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs".

Guided Practice:

 Have the students as a class finish the Venn diagram.

Independent Practice

 Have the students discuss as a class whose perspective is heard in the "True Story of the Three Little Pigs."

- Who talked in "The True Story of Three Little Pigs"?
- Who were the good guys and who were the bad guys?
- Whose side is the author on?
- Do the pigs ever talk to the wolf about how they feel?
- What was the problem in the story?
- What do you think the wolf would say if the pigs talked to the wolf about the problem?

Closure:

 Ask the students why they feel it is important to read both stories, "The Three Little Pigs" and "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs"?

Evaluation: Teacher Observation of participation and discussions and accuracy of Venn Diagram.

Lesson #3

Objective:

SWATS analyze the different perspectives that are possible in the book.

New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards:

3.1E, G, 3.2D, 3.3A, 3.5A

Prior Knowledge:

Students will already know to question other perspectives.

Anticipatory Set:

Explain to students that this story also has two different voices or perspectives like the "Three Little Pigs". Whose voices were in "The Three Little Pigs? And whose voice was told in "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs"?

Input/Modeling:

Read the story "David Goes to School". Then ask the students:

- Whose voice was heard in the story?
- Who did all the talking?
- Whose side is the author on? Who is the good guy and who is the bad guy?
- How do you think David feels?
- Why doesn't the book show a picture of the Teacher?

Guided Practice:

Ask the students what they think the teacher is thinking when she says "Keep your hands to your self"? Do you think that David is not keeping his hands to himself? As a class, draw what the teacher looks like when she is talking to David.

Independent Practice:

Have the students individually take turns drawing a picture of David doing something on the board. Have them explain how David feels and why is doing it?

Closure:

Ask the students why they think that reading and discussing this story was important?

Evaluation:

Teacher observation of student discussion and participation will be used.

Lesson # 4

Objective:

SWAT generate a list of typical societal gender stereotypes.

New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards:

3.1E, G, 3.2D, 3.3A, 3.5A

Prior knowledge:

Students have a general understanding of gender.

Anticipatory set:

As a class, write a list of things that boys can do but girls cannot and vice versa.

Input/Modeling:

First read "Jack and the Bean Stalk." Next read "Kate and the Bean Stalk". As a class complete a Venn diagram.

Guided Practice:

Ask the students:

- What are some things that the boy does that girls can't do?
- What are some things the girl does that the boy can not do?
- Can boys and girls do the same things?

Independent Practice:

Have the class decide on whether the list created is valid or not. Go through the list one by to see if girls can do the same things as boys and vice versa.

Closure:

Ask the students why they thought it was important that boys and girls can both do everything?

Evaluation:

Teacher observation of student oral list and answers, as well as participation will be used.

Lesson #5

Objective:

SWAT draw pictures to answer critical literacy questions.

New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards:

3.1E, G, 3.2D, 3.3A, 3.5A

Prior Knowledge:

The students will have prior knowledge of the critical literacy skills that they have learned through out the week to apply to the post-assessment.

Activity:

Read "The Rainbow Fish". Have the students complete the pre-test as a post test.

Evaluation:

The post-test will be the evaluation.

Lesson Plan Bibliography

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