

The Kindergarten Chronicles

Hmmm... I

wonder...

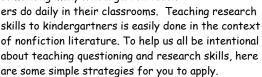
Beth Jacobsen, Goolsby Elementary

Why??

Teaching Questioning Strategies

One of the most wonderful aspects of working with kindergartners is the fact that, by nature, they are very inquisitive learners. Their curiosity about the world around them seems to never be satisfied. One of our third trimester benchmarks addresses that very idea: Discuss, write, and draw to formulate

a question: record information from simple reference materials and technology; answer a research question. This sounds like a daunting objective, but in reality, this is something many kindergarten teach-



Model: As you are doing your nonfiction readalouds, be sure to model think-alouds for your students. You may want to mark specific areas in your text where you stop and comment. For example, "Hmmm...it says here that the sun is a star. I wonder why the sun shines so much more brightly than the other stars?" Your students will see that it is "okay" and even "smart" to ask questions as they read. Be sure to show your students how you find the answer to your question, whether it be through continued reading of the same text, looking in another book, checking out the Internet, or asking another teacher.

Practice: Plan specific lessons or activities that will

require your students to formulate questions, then answer those questions. You may want to do an entire unit of study or you may want to assign specific areas of research to individual students. For instance, you may have students find five facts about their favorite animal and share those facts with the class. Be sure to have your students share how they found the information. More questioning activity ideas can be found below.

Teachable Moments: If a specific question or series of questions come up during your formal instruction, take the time to find the answers to those questions. It may change up your daily plans, but it will be well worth it! Involve all your students in finding the answers to those questions so they understand the research process.

Questioning develops higher-level thinking skills in our students, so it is vital that we teach our students the value of questioning and research skills in our daily classroom practices. Be sure to listen for your students' inquiries and use any opportunity you can to develop these skills and strategies.

Class Opportunity

The RPDP K-1 Literacy Centers class (call number 06747) is being offered June 9 - June 12 at Nate Mack ES in the SE Region. The class runs from 4:00 pm - 7:45 pm and is one graduate credit through UNLV. The cost is \$45.00. Please go to www.unlv.edu to register.

Email Robyn Markovic with any questions.

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Bill Hanlon, Director



Questioning Activities

Wonder Boxes

Debbie Miller teaches an activity called, "Wonder Boxes." As you are studying something in class, allow your students to write down any questions they may have about the topic on an "I Wonder" card. This is a 3x5 card, which the child places in a Wonder Box or Wonder Basket after the question has been recorded. If your children cannot yet

write, you
picture of
the questi
week, pull
help the s
record you

write, you may have them draw a picture of the question, then dictate the question to you. Several times a week, pull out one of the cards and

help the students answer the questions. Be sure to record your source on the card, once your class has discovered the answer.

RAN (Reading and Analyzing Nonfiction Text) Chart:

This expands on the KWL chart. There are five columns: What we think we know; Yes, we were right (confirmed); New facts; Wonderings; Misconceptions. This allows for us to include those thoughts that we know are incorrect, but we want our students to discover it during their process of inquiry. All of the chart's content comes from the students. (Tony Stead, Reality Checks: Teaching Reading Comprehension with Nonfiction K -5)

Fact, Question, Response Chart

Many times you will answer a question only to find that it leads to more questions. As you discover facts, record them on the chart. When the fact leads to a new question, record that in the next column. Most importantly, record your students' responses to the new information. They will see how exciting this research process can be. (Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis, *The Comprehension Toolkit*, Strategy Book 5: Determine Importance)