

Teaching News Is Elementary

March 10, 2017

Each week, this lesson will share some classroom activity ideas that use the newspaper or other NIE resources. You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a class discussion.

Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Materials you will need for this lesson: The Seattle Times print replica, computer or smart board, pencils or pens, paper

Article: PROFICIENCY DROPPED AFTER YEARS OF TEXTING, KEYBOARDS

Section: Main, A14

Print Replica Date: Monday, March 6, 2017

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Objectives:

Students will read an article, and search for personal connections they see in their own lives.

Pre- Reading Discussion:

An ***inference***, is making a conclusion or opinion that is formed because of known facts or evidence. Examine the following pictures and make an *inference* about what the story will be about:



You can learn a lot from a picture if you take the time to examine it closely. Look at the photo and ask yourself:

- What do I see?
- What do I think is going on?
- What does it make me wonder?
- What questions do I still have?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A *context clue* is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

“Third-graders at the school **beamed** as they prepared for a cursive lesson this past week.”

Beam Guess:

Beam Definition:

Reading Comprehension:

1. What is looping back into style in schools across the country after a generation of students who know only keyboarding, texting and printing out their words longhand?
2. When did NY State Assemblywoman, Nicole Malliotakis draw the line in this debate?
3. Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina distributed a handbook on teaching cursive writing in September and is encouraging principals to use it. It cites research suggesting that fluent cursive helps students do what?
4. It's hard to pinpoint exactly when cursive writing began to fall out of favor. But cursive instruction was in decline long before 2010, when most states adopted what curriculum?
5. At P.S. 166 in Queens, Principal Jessica Geller said there was never a formal decision over the years to banish the teaching of cursive. What happened?

Classroom Discussions or Journal Writing Prompts:

- Do you believe cursive is a good life-skill to have? Why or why not?

Malliotakis also noted that students who can't read cursive will never be able to read historical documents. "If an American student cannot read the Declaration of Independence, that is sad."

- Do you agree with Malliotakis? Why or why not?

Some script skeptics question the advantage of cursive writing over printing and wonder whether teaching it takes away from other valuable instruction.

- What are your thoughts on cursive writing over printing?
- Which one comes easier to you? Which do you prefer when writing an essay or letter?

Anne Trubek, author of "The History and Uncertain Future of Handwriting," said schools should not require cursive mastery any more than they should require all children to play a musical instrument.

"I think students would all benefit from learning the piano," she said, "but I don't think schools should require all students take piano lessons."

- Do you agree or disagree with Trubek? Why? Give details to support your answer.

Third-graders at the school beamed as they prepared for a cursive lesson this past week. The 8-year-olds got their markers out, straightened their posture and flexed their wrists. Then it was "swoosh, curl, swoosh, curl," as teacher Christine Weltner guided the students in writing linked-together c's and a's.

Norzim Lama said he prefers cursive writing to printing " 'cause it looks fancy." Camille Santos said cursive is "actually like doodling a little bit."

- Did you learn cursive in elementary school?
- What grade did instruction begin?
- Do you still use cursive?
- How will writing and language development change with more students using computers and texting, than writing?