

Focused Reading of Jigsawed Excerpts

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/TrailofTears/JohnBurnettsStoryoftheTrailofTears.aspx>

Objectives:

- Students will be able to work collaboratively to read and interpret a small chunk of difficult text
 - Students will be able to reach consensus on their responses to focus questions, and present those responses clearly for classmates (in other groups, experts on other excerpts)
 - Students will be able to identify the historical details (time, place, numbers, dates, weather, etc) of the Trail of Tears
 - Students will be able to identify the author's purpose in the letter as a whole, and in smaller decisions within the text
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Previous Lesson: *Students read this exact same text the class period before.*

- First they read it over in small groups, scanning for specific information. Although the text is difficult, these basic macro-level questions were possible for them to do collaboratively.
- Secondly, we read the text together as a shared reading/read aloud. Here I repeated and clarified and asked focused questions and fielded vocabulary questions as they arose.
- Afterwards, students did an independent reading, and were told to write four questions on their copy – either “do not understand this!” questions or questions of the author.
- The text was still daunting; hopefully this close reading jigsaw will make it easier for us.

Walk-In/Warm-Up:

- Students recall and review yesterday's lesson through Turn'n'talk response to a few basic questions about the letter.
- Review this through very quick class discussion.
- Ask students to show a 1-5 assessment of the difficulty level of the text. Explain today's objectives and plan.

Jigsawed Close Reading of Excerpts:

- Divide class into 8 groups (2/3 students)
- Explain the task (read, respond, discuss, reach consensus, type responses)
- Give an appropriate amount of time for completion
- Timed “test” of specific details. Students may ask anyone. Not all excerpts contained all responses.
- Review responses. Students show 1-5 of how difficult today's reading was – hopefully easier!

Gallery Walk Through Whole Text:

- Students take out whole text (yesterday's reading). Review what questions they had.
- Post excerpts and questions around the room. Students cycle through to find the sections that they found difficult. See if the focus questions and responses help you understand the section.
- Write any comments or outstanding questions/confusions on the sheet
- Return sheets to “expert” on that excerpt for clarification, responses back to questioner.

Wrap-Up/Walk-Out:

- Students write one index-card-sized summary of the letter from John Burnett. Summary should include the subject and purpose of the letter, and the student's evaluation of whether or not the letter was valuable and its objectives were met.