

2nd Grade Workstation Questions and Answers

Games Workstation

- What is the "role and write" game? Can you tell me more about this game?

It is a game that is made by Lakeshore... We had one in our library that I checked out. You may want to check out your library and see what literacy games are in there that would work for your grade level. When you intro a new game, it is easiest to do it with each of your small groups over the course of a couple of days so that you can teach them the rules and game playing etiquette. Since it is language arts related, it is fine for you to use some guided reading time for that. After you are confident they know what to do, you can put it in the station. It will make managing that station much easier.

- Is the phonics puzzle a game that was purchased? Or, is this a game you created? If created, what's the scoop on that game?

The phonics puzzle game is one that was given to me but you can probably purchase something similar from a catalogue or from Lakeshore or Mardels or another teacher store. Sorry... I didn't create that one but there are lots of similar things around I think. You may be able to find something like that in your library as well.

Listening Workstation

- How do the students use dice to talk about a book?

This is another thing I intro in small group. We use it several weeks as part of our guided reading and I taught them when and how to use it. They knew to take turns, read the question and answer the question out loud. For some groups it serves as a good way to get the kids to talk about the book other groups aren't as good about it ☺. There are also reading spinners and other little things out there that can serve as conversation dice.

Science Workstation

- How do you use a "probe" book? Is that a science journal of sorts?

It's a little different from a science journal in that it is a paragraph about something that they have researched rather than writing and drawing observations. This is something that we do as a whole group or small group assignment. Students pick a topic, gather research in a circle map, write fact sentences based on the circle map, edit sentences and put them into a good order in a flow map (they also write an intro and ending sentence) then use their flow map to write a paragraph. If you have ever seen a 4th or 5th grade probe book entry, this is what my 2nd graders do as well. What they do at the station is work on their final copy (they have already been guided through all the sloppy copy work). They have to create a border in their probe book (its one of those science notebooks but we just use that one for probes) and write their completed paragraph inside and create a title and picture. Again, this is something that we

do whole group or in small group several times before I let them loose in stations to do the final copy. Look for something like this up on the science curriculum next year in D2SC for 2nd grade.

Clear as mud??? You would probably need to see one to tell what I was talking about but if you just teach your kids how to research something in whole group or small groups, you can give them the template at your workstation and have them research whatever they want.

- Where did you get those large, red magnifying glasses? They look like they would work would out wonderfully.

I got those at Lakeshore (one of my favorite teaching stores but it can be pricey... look for sales and get on their mailing list ☺) There is one located just north of 635 on Dallas North Tollway (a couple of exits past the Galleria). But before you go out and buy some, check with your campus and see if you have any magnifying glasses lying around.

One last question. You mentioned that you'd meeting with your higher level reading students, even if it was just for a few minutes to give them "an assignment." What types of assignments do you give them? Do you have them read a book (or part of one) and report back to you? Do they think and share together what they've read? Just looking for ideas.

Sometimes I have them create a comic strip by summarizing each chapter with words and a picture. If they do that, by the end they have a comic of the entire book. That one generally goes over really well since all they have to do is summarize and draw a picture for the chapter each day (they also get into giving their drawing dialogue). Sometimes I will have them read a book and use the dice that I have in the listening workstation to discuss. Sometimes I have them write me a letter about why they enjoyed or didn't enjoy about the book or what they thought about the main character. If it is a book we are working on for the week, they may need to make a diorama about what they read or create a poster advertising the book. Sometimes its just good for them to have an audience so I will let them go down to a first grade classroom and read their book aloud to a small group after they have mastered it. This is a good idea for all of your groups because it promotes reading with fluency and expression. Just find a first grade buddy teacher and give her a heads up when you will be sending kids down ☺