Introduction

The E-Book Final Project was intended to be a creation of a digital e-book for emergent readers. The goal of this project was to identify a group of emergent readers based on research from Ehri & McCormick (1998) and others and create a digital e-book intended to teach them reading skills on their independent reading level. This project includes research and considerations necessary for creating an e-book that will develop students reading skills and abilities based on their reading level.

The e-book can be accessed through the link:

http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view.php?op=share&book=7b00bf325ea5f9c194dd5ab35f56a76 e&sid=29925

Audience

This book was created with an intended audience in mind. The project was supposed to focus on a particular age group with similar reading skills and abilities. The age range of students for this project were students 8-10 years old and in the 3rd grade. In terms of word recognition, the group of students also were characterized by different areas of strength and growth. Areas of strength for these students were reading accurately and having strong literal comprehension. Weaknesses for students include; inferential comprehension, content specific vocabulary and sight words. Other considerations made were through the research of Ehri & McCormick (1998) in terms of their word recognition ability. Students were considered to be in the "full alphabetic phase" (Ehri & McCormick, 1998) which describes students as having the ability to function well within a text, but need support in content specific vocabulary in context.

Topic

The topic for this informational book will be about young lion cubs. The reason that I selected this topic is because I feel like it will warrant me a great opportunity to engage students with something that is interesting and relatable. In my experience, students are fairly interested in animals. Being that lions are often deemed as very strong animals, I think it would be beneficial to allow this book to be an opportunity to gain insight on information about lions, as well as an opportunity for students to reflect on the similarities and differences of animals and themselves being young. Lions are very interesting animals; thus, I thought it would be beneficial to allow this book to be an opportunity to gain insight on information about lions, as well as an opportunity for students to reflect on the similarities and differences of animals and themselves.

CCSS

This e-book provides students with the opportunity to practice the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) listed below.

Key Ideas and Details

1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

6. Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate an understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

E-Book Features

Print Features

The font and layout used in the book were selected intentionally to engage the reader as much as possible. While a lot of informational texts tend to use regular fonts, I included a unique style font and colored it according to the overall theme of the book in an attempt to increase student interest. The paragraphs were also spaced out for easier navigation, with pictures directly related to the text itself.

Word Recognition

Many considerations had to be made when determining the use of different words throughout the book. Although the book is intended for third-graders on grade-level, I wanted it to include some words that would be easier to decode when provided within the context of a story. For example, the word nurse is a vocabulary word in my e-book, not because the word is difficult but because learners in the "full alphabetic stage" (Ehri & McCormick, 1998) thrive most with fluency, automaticity, and consequently comprehension when they are able to explore words in context. Most of the higher level vocabulary words that are included in the text are given with context in mind, allowing students an opportunity to decipher the meaning of the word without taking too much away from their automatic reading ability. This will foster the greatest amount of comprehension.

Vocabulary

Speaking of the words I highlighted as vocabulary words, three of the words that I included as important vocabulary were: **expelled, vital, and observant**. These words were also bolded and underlined within the text and added to the glossary. The reason that these words were highlighted and introduced was because I felt they would expand the vocabulary knowledge of students reading this text. While these words are not tier 3 words because they are not domain-specific vocabulary, they are words that are important to many different contexts and can be used in various scenarios (tier 2). Since Brabham et al. (2012) suggest that students become familiar with words at a more consistent pace if they are exposed to them across different texts, I found it extremely important to expose students to some rare words that would also be seen across contexts during their academic career. Thus, though there were many other words that I emphasized in the glossary and text, I selected these three words as important words because they stood out to me as the ones with the most potential to expand knowledge across genres and contexts.

Fluency

This book was designed specifically to support students' fluency development.Although there were no specific activities related to fluency development within the book, careful consideration was made for how the text itself could support fluency. For example, many sentences were created to allow for students to engage with the book with the least amount of obstacles possible. The plot development, for example, was designed in a very linear fashion, meaning that students would be able to easily follow along with the text and see connections. I was also intentional with the size of the font and number of words per page. The book starts with

seemingly shorter passages and lengthens throughout, allowing students to build confidence and

stamina before reaching the lengthier pages.

While these intentional designs will support fluency, the most important consideration in

regard to fluency is the relation between comprehension and fluency ability. Applegate,

Applegate and Modla (2009) explicitly recommend that fluency be directly related to

comprehension ability and strategies. In other words, because fluency is hard to assess during an

independent read-aloud, a teacher utilizing this text would need to implement many opportunities

for students to engage with the text. To accomplish this, questions were built into the text that

would in turn aid both comprehension and fluency ability. This strategy is one that will allow the

teacher to be able to have students either stop to answer the question read on with the intention to

find information, or re-read the text for answers to questions. This, in turn, will aid students'

fluency ability.

Comprehension

Comprehension was a huge part of my planning for this e-book and was honestly the

driving force behind my idea to create this book. As we know, comprehension is a critical aspect

of reading and arguably the most important. The demographic of students that I teach are reading

accurately but struggle with comprehension strategies. Harvey and Goudvis (2013) make some

really great points in regard to these strategies. They suggest that the goal is for students to

become "strategic," able to flexibly use different comprehension strategies among multiple texts.

To support students in this endeavor, I built in opportunities for comprehension practice

throughout my e-book that are reflective of strategies I hope students will eventually internalize

and use independently. For example, I start the book by asking a question, attempting to engage

students with prior knowledge. "Are you in a big family?" is the question that I ask. This allows

students to think about themselves in a family and either relate, or not relate, to the rest of what

is said on the page. Since this is such an important comprehension strategy, it is one I utilize

throughout the entire text. I ask students different questions that help them make connections

between themselves and what they are reading with the goal that they will learn to do this on

their own in time. .

To aid this comprehension practice, I feel like giving students an opportunity to jot their

answers down in the response boxes through the book would lend itself to engaging students

with these meaningful comprehension questions. This would also allow for formative assessment

to occur since I would then be able to discuss responses with students at a later time and answer

any questions/address any misconceptions that would be necessary. Each question that I ask

within the actual text and have students respond to through a free-response box help students

make inferences and think critically about what they are reading.

References

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