



Learning Modules

GK-12 DISSECT at New Mexico State University

Title: Word Cloud of Bood

Author: Ben Wright

Discipline or Area: Language Arts

Teacher: Monica Garcia

School: Lynn Middle School

Subject of class: Language Arts

Grade: 8th grade

Objectives

Describe what the students learned from the module:

The students began to use the idea of "abstraction" to figure out important concepts in reading comprehension by drawing out a 'word cloud' on the book they are current reading, The Hunger Games.

Equipment and Materials

What equipment and materials were needed for this module:

Materials

- Blank Paper
- markers/pencils/colored pencils
- rulers (optional)

Equipment

- Projector for presentation

Background and References

Purpose of this module and how does it relate to the teacher's lesson plan:

Work on the student's ability to abstract out important information while reading a book without having to say everything they know about a book.

List of references for fellow material:

The book the students will do this on. (In our case, The Hunger Games)

<http://www.wordle.net> - wonderful website that generates word maps from raw text.

Current research being done in this area:

Lots.

Procedure

Module Instructions:

A quick presentation (included as an attachment) was given at the beginning of the class to see if the students could come up with ways of explaining or conveying knowledge or ideas without necessarily having to write them down 'in paragraph form'. This led to the idea of word clouds, which the students are then shown a few examples of.

After this, students are asked to think of words that pertain to the book they are reading. Once this is done, we asked the students to group up into groups of 3 or 4 and discuss what words they came up with (and to write down any good ones they hear that they previously did not have).

Finally, we asked the students to 'rank' their list of words in order of importance to the book and what the book is about. Using this list of words, the assignment was then to make them a 'word cloud'.

Notes and Observations

What were the challenges that were encountered in the development of this module:

At the beginning, we did not explicitly tell the students to write up a list of words before starting to draw their word map. This led to a few issues: 1) the students only having around 3 or 4 words on their drawing, 2) not having different sized words to show importance, and 3) making most of the words too small to read from a distance.

Also, a fair number of students tried to draw 'symbols' along with their words. We explained that as these are "word maps" you can only draw with words. Two student generated ideas that worked around this issue was using the words as 'lines' and drawing the symbols with the words and drawing the words in a 'font' that conveyed the symbol they wanted to use.

What was successful:

Getting the students to think about 'concepts' and important parts of the book that weren't necessarily character names or chapter titles.

What was the student's reception to the module:

Overall, the students seemed to enjoy it. There was some hesitation as to trying to think of all the words, but all in all it seemed to go over well.