

Writing About Big Ideas: How Johannes Gutenberg Changed the World 5th grade Walking Classroom Podcast #23

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Introduction: With the creation of moveable type, the lower class in society was able to access books, giving them more opportunities to use information to improve their lives. In this lesson, students will focus on how the ingenuity of Johannes Gutenberg brought forth innovations and the sharing of ideas which affected our world economically and socially.

Learning outcomes (be sure to use active verbs)

Students will:

- **incorporate** critical thinking skills that will enable them to make big connections to the impact of history and inventions that changed our world.
- **organize** information to support a written opinion
- **develop** a heightened awareness of paragraph structure and unity to improve the flow of their writing.

Curriculum alignment (list 2 – 3 CCSS standards)

R.I.5.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details

W.5.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting point of view with reasons and information, provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details, provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

Classroom time required

3 class periods, about 45 minutes each

Materials/resources (list all materials teachers will need and amount of copies)

- 5th grade Walking Classroom Podcast 23: Johannes Gutenberg (TE p. 121)
- *Sticking to the Topic* flow chart for overhead projector / Smart Board AND copies for each student
- *Johannes Gutenberg: A Man Whose Invention Changed the World* organizer (one copy for each student)
- *How did Gutenberg's invention of moveable type change the world?* writing prompt (one copy for each student)
- *Gutenberg Writing Rubric* (either display on overhead or distribute one to each student)
- *Transcribing in Action* activity sheet
- *Home Link: Johannes Gutenberg*

Technology resources (optional)

- SmartBoard or overhead projector for *Sticking to the Topic* flowchart activity with class
- Computers for students to work independently (if you choose to word-process final drafts)

Pre-activities

Students should have listened to the podcast that explores the life of Johannes Gutenberg. Through class discussion, use of comprehension quizzes and thick questions, students should recognize the impact that moveable type had on giving people access to information through reading:

- ✓ With the creation of moveable type, the lower class in society was more able to access books, giving them more opportunities to use information to improve their lives.
- ✓ The ingenuity of Johannes Gutenberg affected our world economically and socially, and it made room for more innovations and the sharing of ideas.

Activities

Day 1:

1. After listening to the Johannes Gutenberg podcast, launch a discussion with students about how one person's ideas can have an enormous impact on the world. Ask students, "What would our world be like without books?" (Allow time for discussion) Review how Gutenberg's moveable type led to easier access to books (early "mass production") and gave people, who would otherwise not have it, access to information they could use in their lives.
2. Review the importance of paragraph unity and flow by pointing out that sharing information is essential to learning, but that the information presented in books has to be in some kind of order, or the reader will get totally confused.
3. Introduce students to the *Sticking to the Topic* flow chart. As a class, brainstorm relevant supporting facts and use the margins to jot notes in response to each of the sub-categories (see example). Stress that an orderly flow of ideas helps give a writing piece "unity." Stress how the flow chart has a "flow to it." *This is a note-taking activity, so students should NOT write using complete sentences.*
4. After the class has added supporting details to the flow chart (see example), direct their attention to the conclusion at the bottom of the page. Discuss how closing an essay is an important way of wrapping up and restating the main idea of the topic. Brainstorm possible conclusions for the paragraph, making sure to emphasize that the conclusion is NOT a direct restatement of the main idea / introductory sentence. A strong conclusion should contain a new thought that sums up the paragraph.
5. Call on a few students to review the day's lesson and what was learned, then have students file their notes in their binders – they will need the notes for tomorrow's lesson.

Day 2

1. Review flow chart notes from yesterday and emphasize the importance of sticking to the main idea while writing paragraphs.
2. Distribute *Johannes Gutenberg : A Man Whose Inventions Changed the World of Reading* organizer to each student. Students will independently turn their “class notes” from the flow chart into complete sentences (This will serve as a way of organizing their thinking to prepare them for writing an original, organized essay response).
3. Provide a few students the opportunity to share with the class sentences that they’ve created. Reinforce the importance of sticking to the topic and including relevant information but not being redundant.
4. Review rubric with students so they know how they will be scored.
5. Distribute *How did Johannes Gutenberg’s invention of moveable type change the world?* writing prompt.
8. Write! Allow students to use their organizers to create a final draft.

Day 3

1. Continue writing and sit with individual students who are having difficulty. Students who finish early and have done a good job may work as peer-tutors to give other students ideas, etc.

Physical Activity (Be creative! Have fun 😊)

One way to show students how tedious copying text by hand “perfectly” is (and to get our bodies moving) is to do the following:

1. Pair up in partners or small groups of no more than four students. While one student copies a designated piece of text “perfectly,” the other members of the group must run in place, do jumping jacks, or some other form of physical movement until the “transcriber” has written the passage perfectly! Have students transcribe one of the samples provided with the lesson, OR choose a reading selection from a class novel, a Social Studies or Science text, or any subject you are studying as a class that kids would be able to “copy.” Passages that contain quotation marks or more complex sentences offer more “opportunity” to make mistakes and “start over” again...Remember, if you made a mistake back in Gutenberg’s time, you couldn’t erase it... You had to start again from the very beginning!
2. Allow each student a chance to “transcribe” a passage while the other members of the group stay physically active!

Home Link (How can students share what they've learned with their families?)

Ask students to “transcribe” a story that someone at home remembers about books they have read and enjoyed (or any childhood memory about how they learned something new).

**Stress to students that this time, they don't have to transcribe perfectly. It's more important to get the story written down on paper so it doesn't get forgotten.*

Assessment

Use writing rubric to evaluate student writing

Supplemental Information (use this space to include anything you'd like to add)

Related Website Suggestions

Great Innovators: "Gutenberg and the Printing Press," by StoryBots

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJpJL2YzCOc>