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Lesson 1.3F\_Reflection

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

I began as a Teacher Assistant six months ago. I knew how to talk to children and love them after raising three children of my own over the past fourteen plus years, but when it came to teaching them in the classroom, I knew I still had a lot to learn. Every student’s personality is different, and their learning capabilities are even more different. The only time I “teach” during the day is during a reading group in the morning, while the remainder of the day I offer support. In the beginning I thought, “oh this should be easy, I say a letter and they repeat it a few times and then we move on to the next letter”. This was not the case. I quickly began realizing I needed different strategies for each individual student to help them remember sounds and words. We start by tapping the sounds out on each finger, but it really only helps a few of the students with sounding out words. One of my students for instance struggled with the word “who”. He would always follow repeating the word with “like an owl!”. That became his strategy to remember this sight word.

On days that we are working on harder, challenging words, we will break apart the words on a whiteboard and sound out the first few letters and then the last few before blending them together. I don’t know if I would say I have been successful in teaching them all to problem-solve while trying to read, yet, but I have learned some new steps in this lesson that I am excited to start using during my reading group. Even though I am in a Middle School, my students are at the Elementary reading level, so I am going to try having them work more in groups instead of me teaching the entire time. This may help them to see how the other students learn, and their thinking process and it may help them rather than just trying the way I am teaching. They are already pretty good at motivating and encouraging each other as we read, but another strategy that may help is incorporating some games as we read to help keep them engaged and use some critical thinking skills.