

Soils Video Episode

Science Unit

- *Soils*, published by Science and Technology for Children (STC)

Time Required for the Sessions

- Science session: 45 to 60 minutes
- Writing session: 30 to 45 minutes
- These sessions were videotaped in one morning, but typically, this teacher would have taught the science session and the writing session at different times. For example, the teacher would have taught the science session in the afternoon, and then taught the writing session the next day, either during his normal writing time in the morning or during his science time in the afternoon.
- A writing session is normally about 20 to 30 minutes, but because this is a conclusion based on multiple test results, the discussion and the writing require a longer period.
- Note that the writing session begins with a shared review of the earlier class discussion (shared reflection) during the science session. This helps students, especially in the primary grades, reconnect with the science investigation they did earlier that day or the day before.

Time of Year

- This episode was videotaped in early December at the end of the students' first inquiry-based science unit for that school year.

Students' Science and Science-Writing Background

- Students are at the end of their first trimester (early December) of second grade.
- Some of these students have had inquiry-based science in kindergarten and first grade, some only in one grade, some in neither. Only a few of the students have been exposed to this science-writing program in either of the earlier grades.

Teacher and His Classroom

- The teacher is in his third year of teaching second grade, so he is just finishing teaching this unit for the third time.
- In his previous school, his students were as strong in science and science writing as the students in the videotaped classroom even though his previous school had strikingly different demographics: 75 percent free or reduced-price lunch, 25 percent limited English proficiency, and 95 percent students of color.

- The teacher usually uses a document camera in his writing instruction, but the projected images would not be clear in a videotaped lesson, so he did the shared-writing minilesson on white chart paper.

Students in the Class

- This class has 24 students, 22 of whom were in class the day of the filming.

School Demographics

- African American: 10.5%
- Asian: 14.1%
- Latino: 9.3%
- Native American: 3.2%
- White: 63%
- Free or reduced-price lunch: 26.6%
- Limited English proficiency: 5.7%