

## CREATING THE CONFIDENCE TO RESPOND

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### CLASSROOM AND STUDENTS DESCRIPTION

- Majority of my students are lower income Hispanic students. Many of my students are English language learners even though many of them speak English very clearly. Title- 1, Catholic but publicly funded, School Choice. Low test scores.

### ACTIVITY

#### PART I

- Connection Journal: In one paragraph, explain something you know a lot about: person, place, event, book, movie, job, role, etc. Explain how and why you know so much about this particular topic
- Get into groups of three and go around explaining what you “know a lot about”.
- Share what one member in your group explained to you (and the group).
- Whole class share out → confidence building: students share other students ideas instead of their own because they are able to get to know a bit more about the person they are in the group with and talk about what they learned.

#### PART II

- Hand out Pablo Neruda’s “I’m Explaining a Few Things” & “Smart Word Chart” from Kyleene Beers page 277
- Assign roles in group: Reader, Writer, Sharer
  - Read poem once alone- do no mark
  - Read poem aloud in group (reader role)
  - Listen to poem while reading along
  - Read poem alone again- now annotate (writer role)
- In your groups, using the Smart word chart, each come up with one response about the poem.
  - The writer in the group will record each response-- USING SMART WORD CHART
    - Plot response
    - Writing Style response
    - Theme OR Character response
  - Each response must be supported with evidence from the text: FOR EXAMPLE: “The poem had an ‘important message’ because...(where in the poem specifically made you think the theme of the poem had an important message?)
  - Share with the class one of the responses your group came up with (sharer role)

### (ANTICIPATED) REFLECTIVE REPORT OF PRACTICE IN CLASSROOM:

I am anticipating that my students will feel very included with this activity and appreciate the way that they used conversation and community to build confidence in being a part of participation. I anticipate that this will encourage students to speak up whether they are discussing their own ideas or a group member’s ideas.

### REASON FOR CHOOSING THIS STRATEGY:

I chose this specific strategy for my presentation because one issue I come across in my classroom is lack of participation. It took me almost an entire year to figure out that my students don’t know each other very well at all and this alone makes students feel less comfortable in my classroom. My goal is to create the environment of a caring learning community where students trust each other to speak and share answers, questions and responses. Since most of my lessons this upcoming semester depend on discussion, I need to focus on teaching my students how to discuss and I thought the smart word chart really helps with this. It is true that students sometimes just don’t know how to express their thoughts or feel intimidated by peers who participate often and feel that they can’t “live up to” comments of others.

### PRINCIPLES BEHIND PRACTICE:

- Ways to help create confidence when reading Pablo Neruda’s “I’m Explaining a Few Things”:
  - Connection to culture: use of Neruda poem in Spanish next to English translation. In the NCTE Adolescent Literacy Research brief, there was mention of the “value behind multicultural

perspectives”. I agree that, “students who do not find representation of their own cultures in texts are likely to lose interest in school-based literacies”. My English department head and I chose Pablo Neruda so that we could use the Spanish language together with the English translation in order for students to gain more appreciation for the text. We want to put value on their home language.

- Small groups with assigned roles: writer, reader, share
- Encourage students to not share own ideas but the ideas of others in their group
- Smart word chart (Beers 277)
- Social engagement and conversation

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTEP COHORT:

1. Would you have pre assigned groups for this activity or would you give students the freedom to choose their groups?
  2. Is this activity too overwhelming for students in one class session?
  3. Does confidence building require teacher praise or do the students do this on their own?
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#### MY NOTES FROM CHAPTER 13 WHEN KIDS CAN'T READ BY KYLENE BEERS:

*“When does apathy replace activity and a reluctance to learn replace an insistence for always knowing more?” (Beers 259)*

- **What takes my student’s confidence away before even entering my classroom?**
  - English Language:
    - Lack of confidence with English language
  - Peers:
    - Their priority is to keep the respect of peers not teacher- that is where effort goes. Sometimes it seems like they try harder to not do an assignment to impress or follow along with a peer. It would be easier for them to do the classwork, but that respect from peers is more important to them. *“They won’t try’, we say. Instead, we fail to see that they are trying- they are just trying at what matters the most: keeping some form of respect with their peers” (Beers 259).*
  - Reading Levels:
    - Reading levels low or at different levels from each other → not worth the embarrassment to read aloud
- **Steps for me to take to build participation in my class:**
  - Create opportunities for success:
    - Allowing social and emotional confidence to build as cognitive confidence grows
    - Back up comprehension skills and vocabulary skills
    - CONTINUE keeping expectations high
  - Build the classroom community
    - Help build individual student confidence
    - Guide students to know each other and build trust among each other
  - Connecting the literature to their lives: Supporting the aesthetic stance
    - Teaching them to *“let the ideas, issues, conflicts and contests, triumphs and tragedies of the text become a part of WHO they are, they’ll discover what that text means to them” (Beers 270).*
  - Encourage and Teach Literary Appreciation
    - Unsophisticated appreciation versus sophisticated appreciation page 274. From “It was a good book” to “The language created images that made the book come alive”
  - Building social confidence with ways to respond
    - Descriptive words to describe: plot, characters, theme, and author’s writing style. (Beers 277)

"I'M EXPLAINING A FEW THINGS"

You are going to ask: and where are the lilacs? and the poppy-petalled metaphysics? and the rain repeatedly spattering its words and drilling them full

of apertures and birds? I'll tell you all the news.

I lived in a suburb, a suburb of Madrid, with bells, and clocks, and trees.

From there you could look out over Castille's dry face: a leather ocean.

My house was called the house of flowers, because in every cranny geraniums burst: it was a good-looking house with its dogs and children.

Remember, Raul? Eh, Rafael?

Federico, do you remember from under the ground do you remember my house with balconies on which the light of June drowned flowers in your mouth?

Brother, my brother! Everything

loud with big voices, the salt of merchandises, pile-ups of palpitating bread, the stalls of my suburb of Arguelles with its statue

like a drained inkwell in a swirl of hake: oil flowed into spoons, a deep baying of feet and hands swelled in the streets, metres, litres, the sharp

measure of life, stacked-up fish,

the texture of roofs with a cold sun in which the weather vane falters, the fine, frenzied ivory of potatoes, wave on wave of tomatoes rolling down to the sea.

And one morning all that was burning, one morning the bonfires leapt out of the earth devouring human beings

and from then on fire, gunpowder from then on,

and from then on blood. Bandits with planes and Moors, bandits with finger-rings and duchesses, bandits with black friars spattering blessings came through the sky to kill children and the blood of children ran through the streets without fuss, like children's blood.

Jackals that the jackals would despise, stones that the

dry thistle would bite on and spit out, vipers that the vipers would abominate!

Face to face with you I have seen the blood of Spain tower like a tide to drown you in one wave of pride and knives!

Treacherous generals: see my dead house, look at broken Spain: from every house burning metal flows instead of flowers, from every socket of Spain Spain emerges and from every dead child a rifle with eyes, and from every crime bullets are born which will one day find the bull's eye of your hearts.

And you'll ask: why doesn't his poetry speak of dreams and leaves and the great volcanoes of his native land?

Come and see the blood in the streets, come and see the blood in the streets, come and see the blood in the streets!

By: Pablo Neruda