

Biography Post-it Note Lesson:
Grade: 7th grade English Language Arts
Time: 50 minutes

7.2.4 Identify and trace the development of an author's argument, point of view, or perspective in text.

For this lesson, my students and I were working on our timeline for the biography of Eleanor Roosevelt. During this time I was having them trace the events and author's perspective of Eleanor by using a timeline to organize their thoughts. While working on this timeline, I noticed my students were having a hard time deciphering what were key details we needed to know and what details were not as important. In order to help them find the key details and to be concise, I came up with the Post-it note activity to help them hone in on key details.

Procedure:

1. After we read the section of the biography out loud together, I would explain to them how we need to be concise with the details we add to the timeline. I would have them brainstorm and write what they think it means to be concise and write it in their journals.
2. After we discuss their answers, I would pass out the Post-it notes. I would tell them that for the whole section of the biography, they need to be able to fit their details on one Post-it note. I feel that this forces them to look for the most important details and not just every detail in the biography.
3. We would do one together, looking for one idea together, and then they would get about ten minutes to work on their own.
4. After they are finished working, I would write every idea on the board that they give me. We would then go through all the details and see which ones we think are important to put on our timeline. The students would then add these details to their timeline.

Reflection:

This lesson was extremely successful in my seventh grade class. I was really pushing for them to be concise in their details, and the Post-it notes proved to be a big help. They loved actually getting to use the post-it notes and were forced to only put the necessary details in the limited space. To build on this lesson, the next day I had them use their own process of finding the key details, and many of them asked if they could use a Post-it note because it helped. By the end of the unit, I was noticing that they were being concise on their own without needing to be reminded by me.