



David Blocklinger

# Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: David Blocklinger

SCHOOL: Pioneer Middle School

Position: Language Arts Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 10 years

Q. What is one of the projects your 7th grade student are working on?

A. We are working on a novel unit. The students are reading novels that are about 200 pages. Each day we do a lesson to reintroduce an element of literature. The students discuss what they have learned and share this with their classmates.

Q. How do you help your students develop and maintain a love for reading?

A. I try to find books I would have liked as a middle school student. Many of the novels my students are reading have teenagers as the main characters. They get into a lot of exciting adventures. It's important for the students to be able to relate to the characters in the stories.

Q. How do you make sure the students understand what they have read?

A. We use the Seven Keys of Comprehension which relies heavily on making mental images and connections. Students talk about what they have read in their groups and I go around and ask them a series of questions. I also ask them to make predictions about where the story will go and what they enjoy about the book.

Q. Why is it important to require a lot of reading?

A. Reading is the key to learning. We require reading in our 7th grade Language Arts and Humanities courses. Students are reading various genres of books, including a 200 page non-fiction book each quarter in their Humanities class. Their homework incorporates a lot of reading.

Q. How are you using data to improve academic achievement?

A. Once a month our 7th grade team of content teachers meet to look over the data and collaborate on strategies to improve achievement. This year we will focus a lot of attention on 80 to 100 at-risk students to provide the necessary interventions for success.

Over

MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM  
DAVID BLOCKLINGER'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM DAVID...

Superintendent Mick Miller talked about using the 10 syllable poem to get to know his students. I used this strategy this year to get to know my students. It's reassuring to know the superintendent has been in the classroom and can relate with us.

The new WEBS (Where Everyone Belongs) 6th grade transition program is making a difference. I see a lot of 8th grade students helping the 6th graders. It's positive.



We are committed to doing what is needed for students to be successful. This year we are even more focused on differentiating our instruction to meet each student's needs.