

Pre-assessment

For my pre-assessment strategy I have chosen to use a pre-test in writing as well as a short answer survey to see what students know about vocabulary, genre, and literary analysis. These assessments are given during the first week of gifted education to the entire class. In order to determine current student level, need for flexible grouping and remediation or extension.

The writing pre-test comes from the Literary Reflections Language Arts Unit for High Ability Learners from the College of William and Mary (2006). The genre pre-test is based on the materials that will be covered in the unit. Pre-tests are collected by the teachers. The results are then shared with students and become the first entry in the student's portfolio.

Students have continuous checkpoints throughout the year. Four of these are formal and coincide with progress reports that are sent home each quarter. The students are providing with an ongoing dialogue of their progress and what they need to accomplish to improve and/or extend their work.

Language Arts Pre-Assessment

Directions: Read Isaac Bashevis Singer's story titled "The Power of Light."

Then, on a separate sheet of paper complete the following:

- 1) Should all students be required to read this? Why or why not?

- 2) Are you like any of the characters in this story? If so, how are you and the characters alike? How are you different?

- 3) What does the title of the story mean? In what two ways is light powerful in the story? Give examples from the story to support your answer.

- 4) What genre is this story?

- 5) Use each the following words in a sentence: fretful, tyrannical, impudent, discomfited.

Sample Student Responses to Question #1.

Sample Student Responses Pre-Assessment for Writing

Sample 1

Yes because it's a good story and it's fun reading it. It also has good structure.

Score: Claim = 2 Total Score = 4
 Data = 2
 Warrant = 0
 Conclusion = 0

Sample 2

No I don't think they should read it because some people wouldn't understand it. Also I thought it was kind of boring. People would sometimes skip lines when they were bored. That is what I think.

Score: Claim = 4 Total Score = 10
 Data = 2
 Warrant = 2
 Conclusion = 2

Sample 3

Yes I think that all fourth graders should read this story. It tells you not to give up. I think that is an important moral. Also it shows a Jewish tradition. From the story you can also see what the people felt like in the war. That is why I think it is a good story.

Score: Claim = 6 Total Score = 14
 Data = 4
 Warrant = 2
 Conclusion = 2

Sample 4

I think that all fourth graders should read "The Power of Light." It is a great way to experience what it was like living in WWII. Also it has good vocabulary words and could help them improve their own writing. It is very short and won't take too long to read. I think all students should read this story.

Score: Claim = 6 Total Score = 16
 Data = 6
 Warrant = 2
 Conclusion = 2

For questions two to three, read the story with the whole class. Have students share their answers. Students should write with a red pen to add any insights or ideas to their already completed pre-tests. Students should know that these are not graded and will only serve as a guide to help with progress.

For question four, the story is fiction.

For question five: definition and usage must be correct.