Using Data to Plan Instruction Video Transcript

Amanda Westenberg:
I'm going to give you back your last DBQ and ask you to self-reflect. You're going to have some comments from me and your essay in order to do that.

Every single state right now is talking about data-driven instruction. A lot of times teachers have a hard time saying, "Yes, my student's ACT score is 19, but how does that impact what I'm going to be teaching them tomorrow?"

So when you get your DBQ back, you're going to see a letter, like Proficient, and then you're going to see a series of numbers. Each one of those numbers is going to correspond with a comment on the comment key.

This is data that's really effective and important in getting your kids to move ahead with a specific skill that you can readily and easily track. It's just a matter of tracking it as you're grading your papers. I simply make a note that says, "This is what my kids aren't getting."

We are going to complete a group activity in order to assist your learning of your next step on your DBQ. The purpose of the group is that every one of you that are grouped together have a single skill that you need to work a little bit more on. Some of you may be introduced to a new skill. So, for example, some of you will be introduced for the first time to a point-of-view statement.

I create a data sheet, so I'm going to notice what kids are missing certain skills, whether it be thesis writing, document analysis. But another really important question is, why don't they get it? What is indicated in their work that shows to me why they can't and have not yet completely understood the skill. So, I grouped all of my students according to their needs from the last two DBQs. And then I created an activity that would specifically help them get that skill. What this type of differentiation does is, it says, "This is what I've been teaching them, "where are the holes and the gaps in their learning, and how is it going to impact my instruction tomorrow?"

Every single group will receive a packet and it will have directions that will take you step by step through what you need to do. You're going to get into your

group, I'm going to pass back your DBQs, and you need to complete the self-evaluation form. You have to show me your plan because I need to approve it. Then you need to start working together to complete the DBQ group activity, and if you finish with this today, you will start your DBQ.

I would never do this activity in the first two weeks of school. Even if I had the data. Because I don't have a culture or a community yet where they completely understand what the expectations of the class are, nor do I know them well enough to know who I can group with one another. Learning can look messy, but it can be really well organized and your kids can be really engaged. So sometimes it's a matter of letting go.

In your essay, you never specifically discuss the documents that are there.

Student:
So, you want me to say, like, "in doc," or, like, "according to this person"?

Westenberg:
Yeah. If we're looking at your next DBQ, "According to this population chart by the United Nations, the population of China is supposed to decline by 2100."

Student:
Okay, wait. So, could I, like, cite it with parentheses, too, like, after I make the reference to that idea? Could I just cite it, like, "Doc A"?

Westenberg:
Yeah.

Student:
Okay.

Westenberg:
Yeah. Group think, helping each other out, identifying things that we couldn't identify individually. It's that group support and that scaffolding that we need to provide for students in order for them to work independently later on. They need not only me to identify it, but they have to identify it themselves, as well. If I tell you you don't have analysis in your essay, you might hear me saying that, but if you're looking at somebody else's essay that has analysis, after I've read my own, I should be able to see the difference between those two things and I'm more likely to be able to do it independently.