

Comments on teaching this lesson – Paula Warden

I used my language arts RAFT lesson for my appraisal this week. We have been studying Sam Houston, so this was the perfect time to introduce the writing strategy presented in this lesson using a letter from one of Houston's former slaves. The students (as well as my principal) were thoroughly engaged and everything went very well. The students loved looking at the original document and trying to pick out words that Mr. Hamilton wrote concerning his life with the Houston family. We discussed character traits that Sam Houston must have displayed due to his former slave's thoughts and feelings about him and his family. It was a great piece for drawing conclusions about their lives together.

One thing I did differently was to reformat and print the transcript to fit a single page. It appears as one long, thin column on the website and is somewhat hard to read due to its length.

We ran short on time and had other things to complete this week, so next week my students will complete RAFTs that I can provide samples of for the site. I decided to give them the exact RAFT to write for this first sample (Role=Sam Houston, Audience=Texas Army, Format=Pep Talk, Topic w/Strong verb=focus on task ahead), but later I will let them choose their own.