Teacher Ideas

Students will determine whether each expository paragraph was written to inform, describe, or to explain.

Students can start out in small groups working with the handout about the Chinese New Year. You don't have to cut these apart. The students can use the examples and information in the mini-lesson "Intro to the Unit" Power Point to identify and discuss the elements of the little passages that make them information, explanatory, or descriptive.

To be specific, I've found it really helpful to let students go back and look at slides 2, 3, 4, & 5 from that mini-lesson as they read and discuss the little paragraphs.

Just like in real life, they may not be completely clear-cut. In other words, each passage may be mostly informative with a little description thrown in. That's ok! It's about close reading, discussing the purpose and audience, etc.

Now let students work in the small group on the next set of passages. See if they can figure out which one is mostly informational, explanatory, and descriptive.

Cut apart each card. Each group of students will get one set of these items (cut up and placed in baggies or envelopes).

Each small group will sort the passages into the three categories. The teacher can move around from group to group to monitor progress and to look for teachable moments as students move through the activity.

Once a group is finished (correctly), the teacher will hand out the analysis questions (handout is titled "Expository Purpose").

Students will then work as a group to answer the analysis questions (but each student will still have his or her own paper to record answers).

8.1.1t Matching