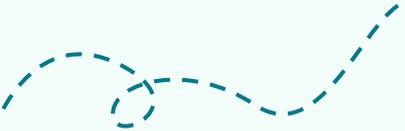




# Increasing Comprehension and Interest through Competition

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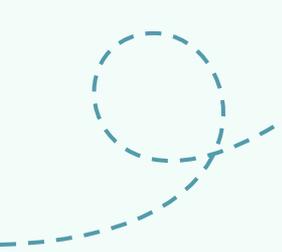
# Original Plan...

I originally decided to focus on a plan that incorporated a “self and society” theme. I was going to have students read books where they could identify themselves as citizens of Greenup County, Kentucky, Appalachia, the United States, and as a citizen on the world. However, our school ended up being virtual all but a few weeks in the first semester. We were also required to make our lessons and assignments last no longer than 15 minutes a day. Another issue I faced was having students participate and complete work. A lot of students didn’t have internet access and would visit hotspots every couple of weeks, and a handful just honestly did not complete anything. With these limitations, I knew this plan would be too far out of reach.





# Modified Plan



# “Battle of the Books” is born...

I needed to come up with something that would engage the students and ensure they were working on comprehension skills and our standards while we were virtual. I finally decided to introduce a competition. We would read four books as a class, all written by Jesse Stuart, and then they would be assigned a book to defend as the best. Students would answer questions while we read the book and then create argumentative presentations to present in front of the class. They would also be required to write an argumentative essay. We would either do this in person or they'd create Flipgrids if we were still virtual. The class would then vote on who proved their book was the best.





# Target Standards:



- **Plot/Characterization**
  - **Theme**
  - **Context Clues**
  - **Citing Evidence**





# Battle of the (Jesse Stuart) Books

**01** Old Ben

**02** The Rightful Owner

**03** A Penny's Worth of  
Character

**04** The Beatinest Boy



# Goals



## Engagement

Get more students participating and excited to learn



## Comprehension

Ensure students are still getting quality comprehension lessons



## Argumentative Skills

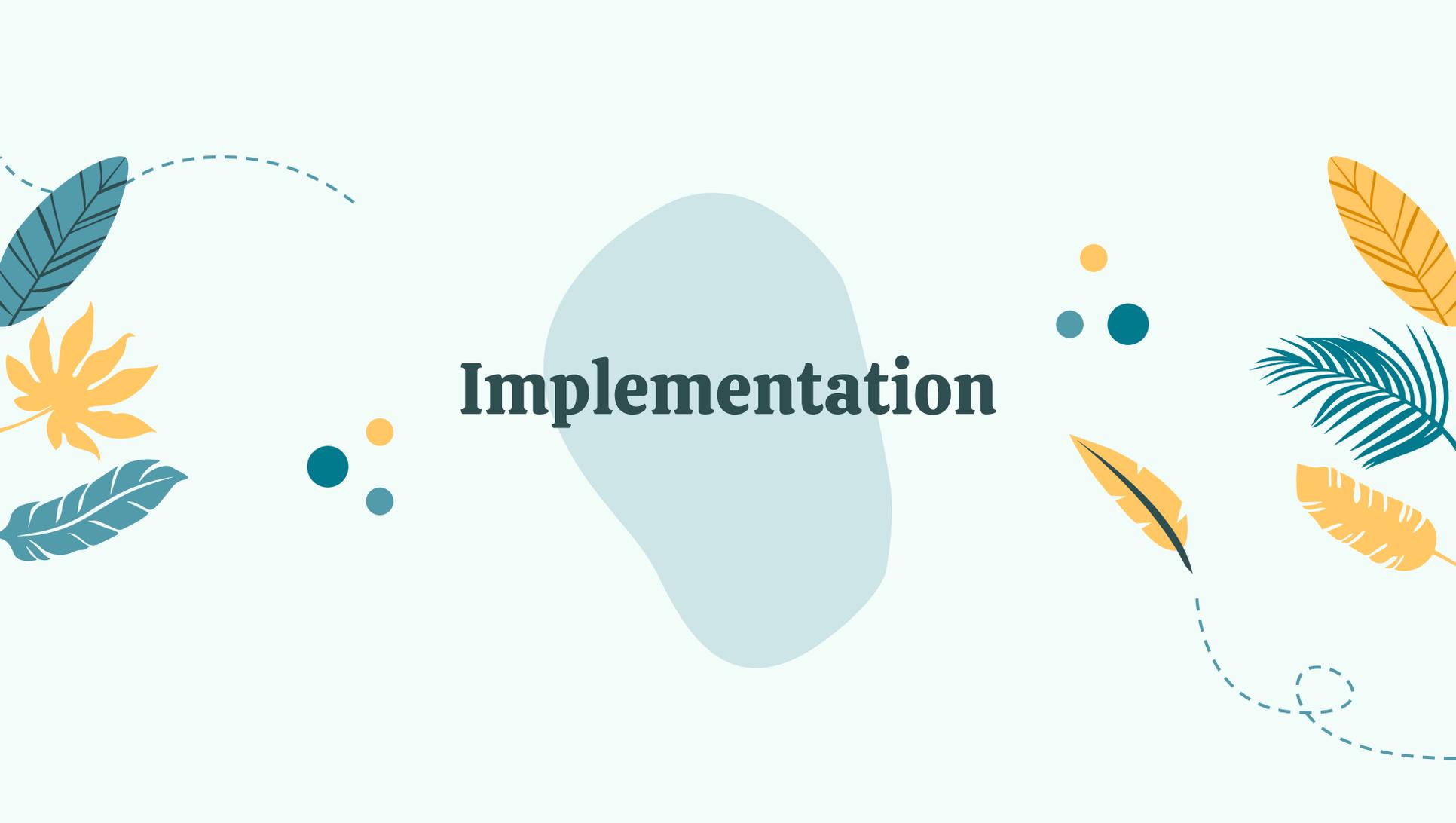
Students learn how to build an argument



## Writing Skills

Students enhance their writing skills

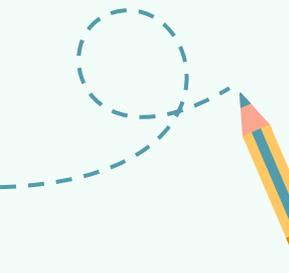
\*All while still hitting our standards

The background features a light blue abstract shape in the center. To the left, there are three leaves: a teal one at the top, a yellow one in the middle, and another teal one at the bottom. A dashed teal line curves from the top left towards the center. Below the leaves are three dots: a large teal one, a small yellow one, and a small teal one. To the right, there are three leaves: a yellow one at the top, a teal fern-like one in the middle, and a yellow one at the bottom. Above these leaves are three dots: a small yellow one, a small teal one, and a medium teal one. A dashed teal line curves from the bottom right towards the center.

# Implementation



I introduced the project to my students. They knew as we started reading they would take notes and write reflections to help them remember each book. We started with “Old Ben” and I would record myself reading to them. Videos were uploaded to different platforms, mainly EdPuzzle and Flipgrid, and comprehension assignments were given with each reading.



Since we were virtual during all four book readings, online platforms were used to measure success and comprehension. EdPuzzles were used for comprehension checks, and Flipgrids were used for discussions surrounding the book.



Assignment:  
Old Ben Chp. 3-4

Using context clues, what does scolded mean? What gave you the biggest hint?

Preview video

Answers by students



I think scolded means Yelled . Because they said told him to stop barking

being scolded means that you are being punished

Like hit or yelled at and I know that because it said "he tucked his tail between his legs and walked back slowly towards the house."

Scolded means getting yelled at for doing something you shouldn't do, Shan's father yelling at the dog.

# Presentations

Students were able to rank the books from their favorite to least favorite and were then placed in a group based on their rankings. They had four main topics they were graded on:

**Creativity**

**Delivery**

**Organization/Clarity**

**Content**





# Sample Presentations

The majority of students used google slides to create their presentations. Below are some examples.

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1csYWPqrLCk0HSTx5R9\\_O96vtZXljY7Rz2AwF0yEYy90/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1csYWPqrLCk0HSTx5R9_O96vtZXljY7Rz2AwF0yEYy90/edit?usp=sharing)

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Htzv68QXgtEiL736UtUo23yeBJ8qFIXku\\_H76nE7Ma8/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Htzv68QXgtEiL736UtUo23yeBJ8qFIXku_H76nE7Ma8/edit?usp=sharing)

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1y26qs0zGY9NdzamOyK04fqVCqRIH9dF0oF51cMZC7d8/edit?usp=sharing>



# Results



- Participation increased
- Students were more engaged
- Answers, reflections, and summaries were more complete and better effort was given
- Students worked harder to understand parts of an argument
- Overall, learning and standard mastery was achieved



# Takeaways



## Group Work

Students love to build upon ideas together

## Competition

This addition added extra motivation

## Engagement

You have to find ways to engage even when it seems impossible!

## Next year...

- Addition of literacy circles

