

**Dawana Whyte-Hug**  
**Melrose Elementary School, Pinellas County**  
**2022 NIE Teacher of the Year Runner-Up**

Dawana teaches journalism at Melrose Elementary School in Pinellas County.

Dawana was chosen as a 2022 NIE Teacher of the Year Runner-Up for incorporating journalism into Kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms at Pinellas County's elementary journalism magnet school.

Dawana always starts class by telling her students that journalists research, journalists inquire and journalists tell stories.

Her classroom activities are focused on the English/Language Arts standards for Kindergarten through fifth grade and reinforce what students are working on in their classrooms.

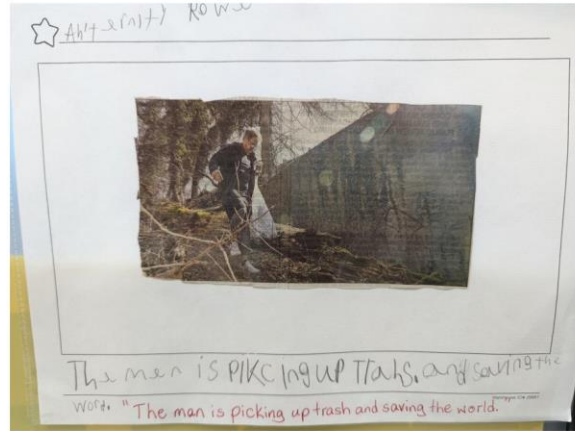
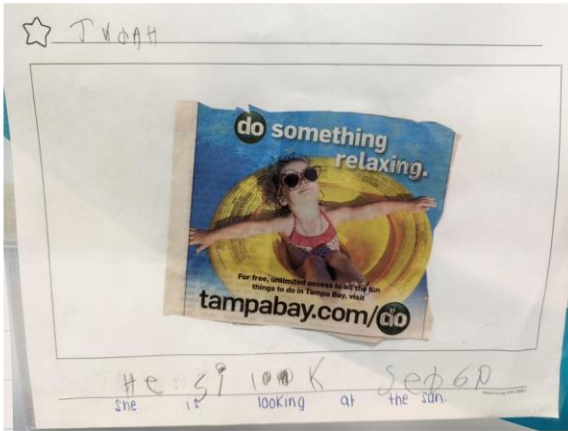
For example, first grade students learn about the parts of speech, and then identify them in newspaper articles.

Others learn to infer what is happening in a photograph cut from the newspaper and write a caption for it.

Dawana uses the comic section to find examples of text features, figures of speech, and other language arts skills that students learn in class.

Older students use the opinion columns in the Times to create their own opinion pieces. One class conducted a taste test of school lunch and wrote opinion pieces about it, complete with photographs.

Dawana notes, "I use the print newspapers and the online edition for a variety of tasks for my scholars. Keeping them informed of what is happening in the world around them is extremely important and it shows them the value of news."



First grade scholars created captions for the photo they chose from the newspaper.

## COMIC STRIPS

**What:** a simple drawing  
A sequence of cartoons arranged in panels.  
To put in a certain order.  
Single Panel - tells a story with one picture.

Comic Strips can include text features and story elements.

**When:** 1895  
The first comic strip was published.

Make an inference: What words could you use?

Personification: Non-living things with human traits. Like talking animals!

Text-to-Self: School, Posing your hands, Using the restroom (Even when you don't need to)

characters: cat, dog

character  
speech bubble  
setting  
under water where they look  
What words could you use?

Using comic strips to identify text features, figures of speech, and any connections such as Text-to-World, Text-to-Text, or Text-to-Self.

### characters

Personification: Non-living things with human traits. Like talking animals!

Text-to-Self: School, Posing your hands, Using the restroom (Even when you don't need to)

cat  
dog

Younger scholars can use wordless comics to create stories of their own. What do these pictures mean to you? What story can you tell with them?

I have also given scholars a topic and asked them to cut out different pieces from comic strips to create a story, add speech bubbles, and then write sentences about their comic.

