



Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Lindsey James

SCHOOL: Walla Walla High School

Position: English Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 2 years

Q. What are you teaching this year?

A. I am teaching Foundations of English I and College Prep American Literature. The Foundations class is designed for both English Language Learners and freshmen who are two or three years behind. American Literature is our standard junior English class. We get into all the great American works of literature over the course of the year.

Q. Are you using different teaching strategies in the Foundations class?

A. The strategies I use are good for learners of all levels. We use a lot of graphic organizers and text dependent questions to draw students to the heart of the text. This strategy helps students notice aspects they might have missed if they were reading quickly or simply reading for the joy of the story.

Q. Why are the students behind?

A. The biggest reason students are behind is they lack academic vocabulary compared to many of their peers. They often come in with a wide gap which increases from year-to-year. For example, if they come in with 10,000 fewer words than their peers, then they read fewer words and hear fewer words and the gap grows over time.

Q. Are you seeing progress with your students?

A. I see great progress every day. Currently we are reading a story The Most Dangerous Game. It is a classic taught freshman year all over the country. Since we have been focused on close details and reading of the text, you hear students gasp because they are really understanding what they are reading. They are connecting and getting a sense of discovery and accomplishment.

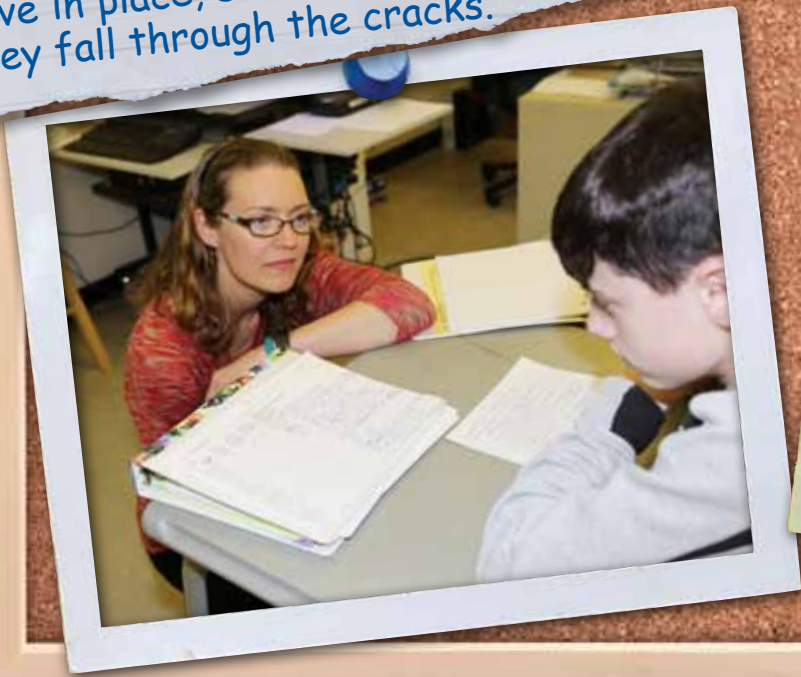
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Lindsey James
I am always happy I went into teaching. I've had the great privilege to work with amazing educators and be able to follow in their footsteps. I lean on them for advice and support. It's wonderful when you see your students succeed.



MORE COMMENTS FROM LINDSEY:
RTI is a great resource we have in the district. Many of the Tier II teachers serve on the RTI committee. We get together every other week and discuss the systems we have in place, so we catch students before they fall through the cracks.

We could use more technology in the classroom. Many of our students don't have access to the internet at home. It would be beneficial for all students to have a tech device at school.



I grew up near Colville, WA and attended the University of Portland. I recently bought a house, so I am doing a lot of home remodeling and landscaping. I also enjoy hiking.