

You Can Do It! SCRIPT TO BE ANALYZED

Script	Comments
<p>Mrs. Robinson: Now, let me tell you what we're going to do today, after we reviewed from yesterday. I want you to really think about something in math that sometimes you really don't like to do so much. Something to do with words. Sometimes if I say we're going to do this and I give you a page with lots of words on it, what are we doing, usually?</p> <p>Connor: Inaudible</p> <p>Mrs. R: What, Connor?</p> <p>Connor: Word problems</p> <p>Mrs. R: Word problems. Do you like word problems?</p> <p>Students: No</p> <p>Mrs. R: Why do kids not like word problems?</p> <p>Students: They's hard... Too much reading...</p> <p>Mrs. R: They're hard, too much reading. They're hard. All right, let me ask you this. Shh. Ok, everybody look up here, this is good. Too much reading, it's hard. Is it hard cause sometimes you look at them and you're not sure what to do to them? You're thinking what, ok, gotta read all of these words and then what do you have to decide?</p> <p>Student: If you add or subtract or multiply</p> <p>Mrs. R: Ok, if you add or you subtract or you multiply or divide. And that, that, that's confusing to some kids.</p> <p>Student: I do all just in case.</p> <p>Mrs. R: You do all of them just in case! Well, guess what we're going to do today? We're going to practice - we'll just</p>	<p>Getting the kids interested. Acknowledging that they are going to do something hard and that they might not like.</p> <p>Asking for their opinion.</p> <p>Acknowledging that word problems can be hard sometimes.</p> <p>Humor.</p>



do two things. How about we just take multiply and adding. And let's decide right here and now that we're going to learn how to look at these problems today, we're going to feel confident that we can look at 'em. Know what the question is -- what they want us to answer for goodness sakes -- what is the unit -- that means what are we going to label the problem with when we get through -- and whether to add and multiply and then will we get the correct answer? Yes, I know you will. You all can do it. And, guess what, I wrote down a couple of problems we'll practice on. I never liked it when my teacher would say you can do some word problems and look in your book and do these words problems. Yes. And guess what? I still didn't know how to do them and I was going please, please help me. Well, we're going to practice together today. How about that, how about that?
All right. I've got some problems.

Student: I do like word problems!

Mrs. R: You do like word problems? Well, let's see. I am going to tell you this- some of our problems- this is what we're going to work on today that I said we'll be able to do. Will you be able to do it when we're through? Will we?

Students: No... yes... maybe...

Asa: No

Mrs. R: No? Why not? Tell Asa we're going to be able to do it.

Students: We're going to be able to do it!

Mrs. R: Ok, what we're going to do is decide between just two operations today, Asa. Multiply or add, ok. At least that way, we'll get these two down pat before we mix in the other operations with it. Shh. Ok, Asa, you're going be my number one here, you're going be able to do it, OK?

Building confidence. Getting the kids invested.

Pledging her support

Making a personal connection and admitting that she too struggled with word problems. Ensuring the students that she won't leave them on their own.

The mood has changed due to the way Mrs. R has set them up for success.

She continues to build the students' confidence.

Getting students to verbalize that they are going to be able to do something gets them invested in being able to do so.

Enlists the class in supporting Asa.

Explains how she is going to scaffold the learning to support everyone. Pledges to support everyone, especially Asa, to success.



You Can Do It!

Summary of Impact:

The Behaviors: When introducing a lesson, Mrs. Robinson acknowledges that what they are about to embark on could be challenging but that she was going to support all students to success. She sends the three positive expectations messages:

- This is important
- You can do it
- I won't give up on you

For more on this, see Chapter 12: Expectations of *The Skillful Teacher*.

The Impact: Mrs. Robinson's behaviors above impact her classroom in several positive ways. First, she has set up a climate of honesty and support. By sharing her experiences of having trouble with word problems, she models that it is ok to struggle on something and even more importantly, it is ok to admit it. Sometimes teachers make the mistake of trying to encourage students by saying "this will be easy," which can translate in a struggling students mind as "if this is easy and I don't understand, I must be stupid." By acknowledging that the problems might be challenging, lets students who might struggle along the way know that this is tough stuff and that some struggle is justified. However, she also clearly sends the message that, even though the material might be challenging, she knows they will all understand it by the end of the lesson. This behavior sets up a positive classroom environment of support where it is safe to take risks.

