

Curriculum and Instruction Synthesis Paper

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Throughout this summer course, I have learned multiple different ways and created multiple tools that I will eventually use in a classroom of my own. Before taking this class, I was unsure of what I would do for organization, class participation, conflict resolution, or even how I would begin the school year. It was through this class, and the following modules, that I have begun to gather my thoughts and write how I will manage my classroom. In this paper I will briefly summarize the main points of each module and describe how I will put each to use in my future classroom.

The topic of Module One was “The Effective Teacher”. In this section the class focused on what made them decided to pursue the career of being a teacher. Through a reflection paper, I came to understand a bit more about the teachers that I admired and who inspired me to walk the same path they did. My third grade teacher and high school history teacher greatly influenced my life and I hope to be at least half the teacher they are. If I am able to influence my classroom in the same way they did, I will hold that accomplishment near and dear to my heart. Topics such as effective teaching, the orientation of the classroom, and the transition into the real worlds were also covered. The discussion question in this module made students consider what they thought was most important as a teacher. If I follow what I believe is most important and best for the students, I think I will have a successful classroom. (See Appendix A for Module One discussion.)

Module Two was entitled “Understanding Your Students”. This chapter focused on different ways of teaching (adaptive versus differentiated), Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences, personal learning styles, and the environments students learn in, whether it be home or the classroom. In this module, our discussion made us focus on how we, the future teachers, learn. By understanding how I learn, I can come to know how others learn. One of the assignments was

to create a tool to get to know students. I plan on using this questionnaire at the beginning of each year to get to know my students. (See appendix B for questionnaire.)

Module Three was all about classroom management. The main focus of this chapter was how I would manage, run, and have an effect efficient classroom. I devised a set of rules that I plan on posting in my classroom. (See Appendix C for list). In addition to this, we learned how to be a great leader in the classroom, how to establish an effective classroom climate, how to arrange the classroom to suit the students and teacher, and how to plan for the first day and respond to misbehaviors, just to name a few topics.

The focus of Module Four was “Goals, Standards, and Objectives.” In this module the class learned about the difference between goals, standards and objectives, educational standards and Common Core. The assignment that stood out the most to me in this module was the reflection on Common Core. I did not know much about Common Core before writing the reflection, and I am still a little unsure of how I feel about it. I can use this reflection in the classroom by understanding how standards, both state and national, are set up and how they should be applied into my classroom so that students do the best that they can. (See Appendix D for a section of this reflection.)

Module Five was all about Unit and Lesson planning. I have made a hand full of lessons previous to this class for other education classes, but writing a unit plan really challenged me. A unit is made up of multiple lessons that all come together. It was tough for me to think of the unit instead of each lesson individually. This module will be implemented into my classroom because I will always be writing or rewriting units and the lessons that belong in each. I will have to change whatever doesn't work, and understand what I can do better to get the subject across to my students. (See Appendix E for an explanation on the difference between units and lessons.)

Module Six focused on the integrations of technology into the classroom. In this module the class had to create a lesson plan specifically making sure that technology was used in it somehow. I decided to write my lesson plan so that students were writing or making some sort of presentation on states and capitals while using computer time to research and prepare their presentation. The chapter itself focused on why a teacher should use technology in the classroom, different types of technology, and different ways of using this technology. (See Appendix F for Technology Lesson.) I believe that it is very important to understand how to use technology and when it is appropriate to use it, so by integrating it into my lessons every now and then, I can help students advance in multiple ways.

The final module (Module Seven) that was covered was Questioning Strategies. This chapter focused on what a question is, what the purpose and different types of questions are, how they should be used in the classroom, and problems that teachers may have with questioning. I did not realize, before reading this chapter, that there were different types of questions. By understanding the different types of questions, I can use this module in the classroom. If I know what kind of questions to ask to motivate my students learning, keep them on track, and help them understand the lesson, I think I can have a successful classroom. (See Appendix G for example questions.)

In conclusions, I believe that it is safe to say that a lot was learned in such a short time. I can use everything that I have made and drafted, in this class, in my future classroom. I already know I will be coming back to the book we used to understand why I should do something a certain way or how I should do something. By using the examples I provided in the appendices, I should have a successful classroom that will flourish of the years. I know as I go on down the

path of teaching I will learn more about myself and what works and does not work in the classroom.

I picture my future classroom and a colorful, friendly, and welcoming environment. I was to have desk pods that the students can work at together with my stool in from of the classroom. I may even have my desks set up in a semi circles so I am able to see every students at all times. It may be easier to keep everyone on task and focused that way. I want to have a few posters up, both educational (math, English, other countries, etc.) and motivational. I how to have a type of trust with the students that they feel comfortable to come time me to talk, and that they feel comfortable to show emotion in front of their peers. I will keep track of students learn progress and what their goal is by the end of the year and make sure to keep their parents involved most of the time. These are just a taste of what I hope to have in my classroom. But, like I said previously, once I begin teaching, I am sure I will grow in multiple ways along with the students.

Appendix A: Module One Discussion

I believe that skills in the method of teaching is most important. It is important for a teacher to know and understand what they are teaching their students but if they are unable to successfully deliver the lesson and have all of the students understand, they won't get anywhere fast. I have had teachers who are incredibly smart and could tell students everything they know about the subject, *but* they did not deliver the information in a way that kept the students engaged or in a way that the students could fully understand. Many hours of some of my high school classes were spent reviewing and relearning what we had been taught because we did not understand the teacher. Similarly, I have had teacher who do not know much about the subject, but they have a strong method of teaching and every student enjoys their class and, typically, did their best throughout that class.

I think that if a teacher is able to successfully deliver the lesson, adapt it to every student's needs, and have all of the students understand, the knowledge of the lesson will strengthen.

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Gimme Five!

Welcome to my class! Being I don't know you yet, please fill this out!

5: Write 5 things that you want me to know about you. Do you have siblings, pets, hobbies or future goals?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

4: Write 4 things you want me to know how about how you learn. Do you have difficulties with anything? Do you like to learn a certain way? Do you need extra time with some things?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

3: What are 3 things that you want to learn this year?

- _____
- _____
- _____

2: What are you top 2 favorite subjects? Why?

- _____
- _____

1: What is 1 other thing that you want me to know?

- _____

Appendix C: Classroom Rules (original is more detailed, this is a condensed version)

Miss Behm's 3rd Grade Rules

1. Treat others the way you want to be treated
2. Don't be afraid to ask questions
3. Your actions will have consequences
4. Make your work your own
5. Help others out as much as you can
6. Do your best and nothing less
7. Always encourage your classmates
8. Participate fully and stay engaged in class
9. Follow the class rules
10. Always be on time and hand things in on time

Appendix D: Common Core Reflection (brief section)

...As I was writing this paper I discuss thoughts on Common Core with a friend who is also going into education. When I asked her opinion, she made a few comments about how she did not think that the government should be involved in “telling states how to educate their children.” As I continue to read about the development of the Common Core standards, it is made clear that it was not the state who came up with the standards alone; the government collected opinions and information from professionals, school administrators, parents and other individuals to build the best set of standards. It was not the government alone that decided what was going to be in Common Core. Feedback from teachers was fundamental in the formation of Common core.

The final piece of information that stood out most to me was the teacher’s role in the development of the standards. Teachers served on different groups that gave feedback about the English and math standards. The feedback that was given was constructive and specific, providing opinions that helped shaped the final set of standards.

Before I began this assignment, I was not sure what to think of Common Core standards, but after doing some research on their website and realizing that it was not “just the government” that drafted the standards, but groups of highly recognized professionals, teachers and parents that contributed to the formation of the standards, I am beginning to form an opinion. Next time someone asks me what I think of Common Core and its implication in the classroom, I can give them an honest and educated answer....

Appendix E: Excerpt from Module Five questions

2. Compare "units" to "lessons". What are the differences between the two?

A unit is the main focus of all the lesson that fall under it. For example, a larger unit a teacher could be working on is on the solar system. The solar system unit is made up of smaller lessons that help achieve the main goal of the unit. Being the unit is on the solar system, there could be individual lessons on each planet, the stars and other things in it, etc. Lessons are built off of each other in some way to achieve the understanding of the complete lesson. In short units are made up of lessons.

Appendix F: Technology Lesson

States and Capitals**Grade:** 4**Subject:** Social Studies

Materials Needed: Teacher- Lesson book, projector/board, Kahoot quiz, access to computers for classroom Students- books, computers, some sort of device that they can use Kahoot on, access to making power points

Standards:

4.1.3 Create a mental map the demonstrates understanding of the relative location, direction size and shape of the United States (e.g., states, major cities, capitals, major landforms)

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- identify/locate* states by their shape and location
- label/match* states and capital correctly
- write/prepare/create* a short speech and power point on a state

Learning Activities:

1. Begin lesson by reviewing past social studies lesson. Then ask students what they know about states and their capitals.
 - a. Have they been to any?
 - b. What is special about a state capital?
 - c. Can they identify any on maps?
 - d. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNUDDaEOvuY>
 - i. This is Wakko's 50 State Capitols- This is can be played at the beginning of each day to help students memorize and become more familiar with the states and their capitals.
2. Begin lesson about states and their capitals.
 - a. Each day this lesson continues, cover a handful of states and their capitals
 - i. Significant characteristics, where they are located.
 - b. With each state students will get a printout of the state outline or the section of the United States where they are.
 - i. Print outs need to be big enough that students can write significant characteristics of each capital in the state and mark where the states are.
 - c. Students should be studying the capitals and states as we go so they are able to identify them in the future.
3. Once about half way into full lesson, students will pick a state that they want to present on (work with computer teacher on this)
 - a. Once students pick a state, they are in charge of researching:
 - i. 6-10 facts about the state
 - ii. Who the governor is
 - iii. Where the capital is
 1. 3 facts about the capital

- b. Students will have time in the classroom to work on this with laptops or tablets. When students have computer lab time they will work on putting together a power point.
4. Continue lesson until all 50 states are covered and students can are familiar with their shape, location and capital.

Assessment/Homework:

1. Student will have a deadline to complete their power point by (TBD by teacher at beginning of lesson)
2. Students will present their final power point to their peers and add to their state outlines as they go.
3. When Students are done presenting and have studied every state, teacher will present a Kahoot quiz to the classroom (this can be used as an assessment or quiz)
 - a. Students should have some sort of device they can do this on (tablet, laptop, cellphone, etc.)
 - b. Kahoot questions will include:
 - i. Outlines of states that students have to identify
 - ii. Identifying which capital goes with the presented state or vice versa
 - iii. “if this is _____ then this is _____” identifying one state based on another.
 - iv. Identifying a fact about a state based on the capital of state that is given or vice versa
4. Teacher will collect state outlines and make sure that students filled each out to gain full credit.

Reflection:

Appendix G: Example Questions

1. Getting interest and attention:
“If we were to go to a zoo, what animals would you see in the African exhibit?”
2. Diagnosing and checking:
“Going back to yesterday’s lesson, does anyone remember what the definition of *tadpole* was?”
3. Recalling specific facts or information:
“Who was president during World War II and what role did he play?”
4. Managing:
“Did you hand in your assignments from yesterday?”
5. Encouraging high-level thought processes:
”Think about what we have learned about the seasons. What are some activities that you can do in each season?”
6. Structuring and redirecting learning:
“Being we have read the directions a few times, do we understand what needs to be done?”

7. Allowing expression of affect:

(End of day reflection with younger students)“What was your favorite part about today and what are you most excited for tomorrow?”