

Pro I Fall 2017 Semester Reflection

Introduction

This semester has marked a tremendous growth for me. The 80 plus hours I've spent working towards my professional education degree has solidified my passion for teaching. This semester was filled with learning how to design and implement lesson plans, unit plans, and teaching methods. I feel as though this semester has been not only the highlight of my college career but the turning point of being a student to becoming a professional educator. I have learned how to lead classroom discussion, present new concepts and work with students individually and in groups. My lesson plans have included technology and demonstrate an understanding of the context of the students. I have learned that becoming a teacher is truly a professional career and that the amount of students I could positively impact is countless. My artifacts that will be addressed in my reflection include my formally Observed Lesson and Post Observation Reflection, a Transcendentalism in Music Lesson Plan, a Transcendentalism Unit Plan, and Literary Artifact Catalog Lesson Plan designed in a methods course.

Interactions

My placement for this semester had students with a wide socioeconomic diversity. A little over 30% of students were considered economically disadvantaged. Students of low and high income were in my assigned classroom and they were provided with a lot of resources both in and outside of the classroom such as free/reduced lunch programs, school fee payment plans, college application fee and ACT registration fee waivers. During my time at this school, every student was given a laptop to lease for the entire year. Regardless of socioeconomic status, students could take these laptops home with them and use them to their fullest potential for their classwork. The question of whether or not a student could afford it was not an issue because the

school provided laptops as a resource for every enrolled student. Also, this school provides bus services to all student. Additionally, there was a program every Tuesday and Thursday where students were given free tutoring services for an hour after school and were provided with bus services for the students who stayed as well, which I find an outstanding resource. Many students took advantage of the after-school tutoring and busing.

I experienced some experience with ethnic and racial diversity in my field placement as well. The school I attended included a population of 5% of racial or ethnic diversity. My classroom included a few diverse students; one African/American student and two Hispanic students. I had the chance to speak with the teacher who was the leader of the diversity club at the school. This advisor said that the school was very open and excepting of all students and this club was a resource provided to make sure the entire student body felt included. My classroom setting was very including to all students and had a high number of student engagement and participation solidifying the minority's inclusiveness in the student body.

In my placement, I also had interacted with students who had dyslexia, 504, IEPs, and were classified as gifted/talented. For the students who had a specific learning disability, I witnessed accommodations such as extra permitted time and tutoring services in the classroom. One bell of my placement included a total of 7 gifted/talented students. I observed these students being active participants in the classroom and were often guided to be involved in educational self-discovery as opposed to being given the answers.

The school that I was placed in this semester also included a small portion of English language learners. There were two students in my classroom that spoke English as their second language but were very fluent in English. It was not necessary to accommodate any assignment in this particular classroom for these students, but the whole district had an English Language

department dedicated to the success of ELL students at all grades. The EL department created a Program Service Program for every student and family classified as English language learners. The students that were in my placement had been involved with this program for a number of years and demonstrated excellent work and participation in the classroom.

Discussion of Artifacts

This semester I was overserved teaching a lesson plan by my university supervisor one time and completed a post-observation reflection. This was my first observed lesson plan. The lesson plan implemented on this day was designed as a writing activity where students discovered the importance of an established tone and its effect on vocabulary as an author. This artifact includes the entire observed tone lesson plan and the post-observation reflection as well. The lesson involved students collaborating on a timed writing assignment where they had to pass papers and continue the story in a specific tone chosen at random out of a cup. This was designed to be a fun activity that established a positive learning environment on the student's first day back from fall break (3.2). This lesson plan was co-taught and designed alongside my cooperating teacher and really showed how working collaboratively enhanced the student's learning and engagement (8.2 & 8.3). When the lesson was over, I met with my cooperating teacher and university supervisor to discuss how well the activity went. I analyzed the student-written stories to determine the students' understanding of the relationship between tone and vocabulary in writing as a class (7.1 & 8.4). The second part of the artifact included my reflection on how I thought the overall lesson plan went. Taking my cooperating teacher's constructive comments and my own reflection, I demonstrated that I could pinpoint my strengths and weaknesses and identify where I can improve in designing lesson plans and facilitating classroom instruction (9.2).

My next artifact is the Transcendentalism Unit Plan I designed and implemented with my cooperating teacher during my intensive week. This unit plan includes five complete days of classroom instruction that surrounds an introduction and overview of the fundamentals of transcendentalism. The unit plan includes guided self-discovery, group work, and activities for all students at multiple levels of learning (2.5). Although transcendentalism is a movement that started back in the mid-1800s, I wanted this lesson plan to directly address the students' misconceptions of the content as "unrelatable" by implementing class discussion based on famous quotes and music in the first two days of instruction (1.5). For instance, the first day of the lesson plan is designed as a pre-assessment to gauge how much knowledge students had about transcendentalism before any lectures (5.1). Students were given a series of quotes from famous transcendentalists and asked to reflect on the similarities between the quotes, make hypotheses on the beliefs of the speaker of the quote, and ultimately define what they think transcendentalism means based on the given quotes. This activity was very self-guided and involved a lot of reflection to assess the students' prior knowledge (2.3). This unit plan included a different activity surrounding transcendentalism every day to actively engage all students and led up to reading and annotating an excerpt from Thoreau's *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* (4.1). Designing this unit plan demonstrates that I can plan instruction based on state standards and shows that I have planned to use a time period of 5 days in the classroom to its fullest potential (2.1 & 4.3). The Transcendentalism Unit Plan was one of my most enjoyable experiences in my field experience and really strengthened my self-efficacy for creating classroom content, worksheets, and discussions that contribute to student learning! (1.3).

My next artifact is one of the lesson plans that I designed included in the transcendentalism unit plan discussed above. This lesson plan is titled "Transcendentalism in

Music” and was implemented on the second day of my intensive week. I included this lesson plan as an artifact because of the positive feedback I received from my cooperating teacher and the quality of student work that was turned in for a formative assessment of the concepts of transcendentalism. This lesson plan includes students watching four music videos on YouTube and picking out what lyrics reflect a transcendentalist idea. This lesson plan demonstrates the use of technology when designing and implementing a lesson plan by accessing multiple videos from the internet (6.1 & 6.2). This lesson plan also demonstrates my desire to have students understand transcendentalism from a musical perspective and not just a literary one (1.4). I included a wide variety of music into the lesson plan as well and used artists such as Michael Jackson and Katy Perry, so the students would be familiar with and find relevant in their lives (2.2).

My final artifact is a lesson plan that I designed in one of my methods courses, ENG 535 Teaching High School Writing. I including this lesson plan because it confirms my ability to design a group project for a classroom that focuses on the techniques of persuasive writing through a real-world lens. I titled this lesson plan or project “Literary Artifact Catalog.” Essentially this project asks students to design a magazine that includes important objects from a novel of their choice. The objects, or artifacts, are described as if they are on sale and include a description that shows its importance to the novel. I really enjoyed writing this lesson plan because I had the complete creative freedom to show what I have learned over this entire semester into one lesson plan. It demonstrates that I have reflected on my areas of growth in becoming a professional educator (9.4). This assignment connects the class to a real-life advertising experience as students are writing descriptions to sell a product in relation to its literary importance of a novel (1.2). My professor said that this lesson plan is engaging and

includes transferrable real-world skills that would be beneficial to any student. This project also includes students designing their catalogs on the computer which demonstrates that I can integrate the students' use of technology into classroom content (6.3). This artifact shows my creativity in designing lesson plans and projects in a way that students will be engaged and can practice a useful writing skill.

List of Standards and Performance Criteria Addressed.

STANDARD 1: THE TEACHER DEMONSTRATES APPLIED CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

- 1.2 Connects content to life experiences of students
- 1.3 Demonstrates instructional strategies that are appropriate for content and contribute to student learning
- 1.4 Guides students to understand content from various perspectives

1.5 Identifies and addresses students' misconceptions of content

STANDARD 2: THE TEACHER DESIGNS AND PLANS INSTRUCTION

- 2.1 Develops significant objectives aligned with standards
- 2.2 Uses contextual data to design instruction relevant to students
- 2.3 Plans assessments to guide instruction and measure learning objectives
- 2.5 Plans instructional strategies and activities that facilitate multiple levels of learning

STANDARD 3: THE TEACHER CREATES AND MAINTAINS LEARNING CLIMATE

- 3.2 Establishes a positive learning environment

STANDARD 4: THE TEACHER IMPLEMENTS AND MANAGES INSTRUCTION

- 4.1 Uses a variety of instructional strategies that align learning objectives and actively engage students
- 4.3 Uses time effectively

STANDARD 5: THE TEACHER ASSESSES AND COMMUNICATES LEARNING RESULTS

- 5.1 Uses pre-assessments

STANDARD 6: THE TEACHER DEMONSTRATES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TECHNOLOGY

- 6.1 Uses available technology to design and plan instruction
- 6.2 Uses available technology to implement instruction that facilitates student learning
- 6.3 Integrates student use of available technology into instruction

STANDARD 7: REFLECTS ON AND EVALUATES TEACHING AND LEARNING

- 7.1 Uses data to reflect on and evaluate student learning

STANDARD 8: COLLABORATES WITH COLLEAGUES/PARENTS/OTHERS

- 8.2 Designs a plan to enhance student learning that includes all parties in the collaborative effort.
- 8.3 Implements planned activities that enhance student learning and engage all parties
- 8.4 Analyzes data to evaluate the outcomes of collaborative efforts

STANDARD 9: EVALUATES TEACHING & IMPLEMENTS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 9.2 Identifies priorities for professional development based on data from self-assessment, student performance, and feedback from colleagues
- 9.4 Shows evidence of professional growth and reflection on the identified priority areas and impact on instructional effectiveness and student learning