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Life isn’t about finding yourself; life is about creating yourself.

George Bernard Shaw

Foreword...

In the beginning...
We were asked to introduce ourselves but at the cost of sounding repetitive, I am going to reproduce here the exact words with which I began my SOP when applying for this program. It should convey the idea of who I am!

If someone had put the what-do-you-want-to-be-when-you-grow-up question to me in school I would not have said “a teacher”! Despite the fact that I was lucky enough to have had some of the most wonderful people as my teachers – people who have made a difference… I believed then that teaching was something anyone could do. You became a teacher when nothing else worked. It was not challenging enough…in fact it was boring.

Today every time I hear Shaw’s hackneyed “Those who can, do; those who can’t, teach.” I know that nothing can be further from the truth. I now know that pedagogy is a gift, a skill, a science, an art, empowering and humbling, and so very fulfilling, with an incredible reach.

So, for me today there’s no other profession I’d rather be in.

When I submitted my application for this program, just a little short of a year ago, I hoped I would be selected, but I also thought I might not make it because of the competition. My family and friends had more faith in me than I did! And so I became a student once again and in the past weeks I have learnt a lot in terms of skills and approaches. But most of all I have found there is so much more to know, to explore and discover and to experiment with.

There is an old but very good joke about teaching which goes…

One day a mother comes home from work and asks her son, "What did you do today?" The son replied, "I taught our dog how to play the piano." The mother, incredulous, asked, "Our dog can play the piano?", to which the son laughed and replied, "Of course not mom. I said that I taught him; I didn't say that he learned how."

This program has made me pause and think of the work I was doing. I am there not to teach my students History, or English, or whatever subject I may be teaching. I am there to teach my students how to learn History, or English, or whatever subject I may be teaching.

"Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.” Confucius
GMU SEMINARS

General
A series of very interesting seminars were held through the five weeks. There was much discussion and sessions were usually interactive. Lots of ideas were generated and many new ways of looking at things familiar were thrown up which brushed away all the cobwebs! A brief look at some of the themes:

**Life Style Inventories**

This was a kind of psychometric test that each participant took to discover what kind of a person he/she was. The exercise had many a surprise in store for many. Each kind of personality had certain specific traits and it was interesting to read about them. It was also an exercise in helping us to arrive at a better understanding of our strong and weak areas and give a thought to utilizing and improving on them.

**Reflective Practices**

In this seminar we discussed how important it was to reflect regularly on our teaching. The ways of reflecting may be varied but the benefits are obvious and assured in improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching. I learnt that I need to set time aside for “assessment for learning” side by side with “assessment of learning”.

**Multiple Intelligences**

In this seminar over two days we looked anew at Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences and how a teacher must always give adequate room for learners with varied intelligences. Each lesson must be structured in a way that gives students of different intelligences scope to learn to the best of their abilities. It may not be possible to address all six intelligences in the space of a single lesson, but often we tend to stay with a couple of teaching strategies that address learners with one kind of intelligence and fail to engage others.

**Leadership**

As part of the leadership discussions we learnt what goes into building an effective team and guiding it to accomplish desirable changes. We discussed what constitutes good leadership, focused on PLCs (Professional Learning Communities), and dwelt on how to overcome resistance to change. One of the guest speakers, Mr. James Upperman held a most interesting session where we learnt techniques of reviewing another teacher’s lesson.

**Cooperative learning and working with groups**

A series of interesting discussions based on actual classroom situations in the participating countries left everyone in no doubt about the effectiveness of cooperative learning and group work. Various strategies were discussed and the pros and cons of each were debated.

**Social Studies**
In the classes spanning five weeks we learnt about many new approaches and strategies that are very effective in the teaching of Social Studies.

We began with the **Backwards Design Model** which is a concept I was familiar with but did not know its name. It is just as it name suggests…it goes backwards. That is it begins by deciding the desired learning outcomes/objectives of a particular unit/lesson and then works its way backwards to the planning stage keeping the outcomes in mind the whole time.

Then we discussed various kinds of **assessments**, formative, summative and even diagnostic. We agreed that it was important to match the assessment with the content.

The **LEARN Model** of classroom teaching is a very useful checklist to maintain for effective teaching. L=Learn, E=Explain and Engage, A=Activate and Apply, R=Reflect and N= Next. Various strategies for each stage of instruction were discussed at length.

One discussion was all about a book called **Classroom Instruction that Works** by Robert Marzano, Deborah Pickering and Jane Pollock though it is popularly known as **Marzano’s model**. This again is exactly what the name suggests. It lists nine essential strategies that make teaching in the classroom that much more effective. Some of these are identifying similarities and differences for better understanding and retention, summarizing and note taking skills, cooperative learning techniques, homework strategies etc.

Then there was a most impressive and interesting display of **manipulatives** by Mr. Peter Kentucky, a teacher of World History at Robinson High School. Manipulatives are diagrams, charts, blocks, objects, anything that gives the learner a hands-on, visual-tactile feel of a topic to aid understanding and retention. A lot of creativity and time goes into the making of manipulatives but once created they can be used again and again for maximum teaching effectiveness.

More teaching strategies in the form of **literacy strategies** and **foldables** were also talked about as well. Foldables are wonderful encapsulations of units, very helpful as study aids.

We were also lucky to be able to accompany the students of Robinson High School on a **field trip to Philadelphia**. It gave us the opportunity to see Philadelphia as well as observe a ‘field-trip-in-action’. Two hundred and fifty students of Grade 10 left in five huge buses accompanied by five-six teachers and a handful of parents. We left at 6.30 a.m. and were back at 7.30 p.m. Each student was given a worksheet to complete as we went on a historical tour of the city. The students all fill in the worksheets, asked intelligent questions of the tours guides, had fun and enjoyed themselves and behaved with impressive discipline. I am sure each student learnt something that he/she would not forget. It was a lesson for me on how a field trip should work!
A man's mind, stretched by a new idea, can never go back to its original dimension.

~Oliver Wendell Holmes~

LESSON PLANS
Lesson Plan 1

Intern: Sunita Biswas                      Grade Level: 9

Title: An Introduction to the Renaissance       Date: ________________________________

I. Objectives

1. The students will understand that evidence of Humanism in the European Renaissance can be found in paintings from the Renaissance.

2. The students will understand the differences between the cultures of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance that are revealed in works of art.

3. The students will learn to distinguish the stylistic differences between Renaissance paintings and works of art from the European Middle Ages.

4. The students will be able to apply criteria of Humanistic evidence to paintings to determine their place in Renaissance history.

II. Materials for Learning Activities

1. LCD Projector or large display-sized reproductions of
   a. Madonna and Child in Glory (Jacopo di Cione),
   b. Miraculous Mass of St. Martin of Tours (Franconian School),
   c. Madonna and Child with St. John (Giuliano Bugiardini),
   d. Adoration of the Shepherds (Giovanni Agostino da Lodi),
   e. Adoration of the Magi (Kress Monogramist),
   f. Bean Eater (Annibale Carracci)

2. White board, markers

3. A collection of online or postcard sized reproductions of paintings from the Middle Ages and Renaissance

4. A handout on the background to the growth of humanism

III. Procedures for Learning Activities
The teacher will explain to the students that during the Middle Ages (a period of European history from the third through 13th centuries), art and learning were centered on the church and religion. But at the start of the 14th century, people became less interested in thinking about God, heaven and the saints, and more interested in thinking about themselves, their surroundings and their everyday lives. The values and ideals popular during the European, Renaissance can be described by the term secular humanism: secular, meaning not religious and humanism, meaning placing the study and progress of human nature at the center of interests.

The teacher shows students reproductions or projections of the works listed above and explain each with regard to artist, year, theme, medium, special points etc. She will also guide them towards a comparison of the different paintings. She will keep a list of new vocabulary on the whiteboard.

IV. Assessment

The teacher will give the students reproductions of a variety of paintings from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Students may work individually, in small groups or as a class. They will put the reproductions in chronological order, using the criteria written on the board: halo, hieratic scale, landscape, oil paint, perspective. If students work in small groups, each group may present and defend their chronology to the class.

V. Differentiation

The students will be able to visually engage with the paintings for better understanding and retention. For non-verbal learners the graphic organizer will help them to sort out the facts they have learned and the presentation at the end will give all students a chance to show what they have learnt.

VI. Reflection

Were the students successful in ordering reproductions of works of art from the Middle Ages and Renaissance chronologically? Did the students refer to concepts learned in the lesson as criteria for their choices as they ordered the reproductions?
Lesson Plan 2

Intern: Sunita Biswas

Grade Level: 8

Title: Festivals of Light

Date: _______________________________

I. Objectives

1. To create understanding among students of different festivals around the world
2. To develop the skills required to sift and list commonalties arrive at better international understanding.
3. To encourage them to work together to convey their understanding and new knowledge.
4. To look deeply at the meanings of symbols…in this case the meaning of light.

II. Materials for Learning Activities

1. A PowerPoint presentation on the Festivals of Light, equipment required to view it.
2. Handout with information about the selected festivals
3. A blank grid to fill based on the handout.
4. White board, poster papers, markers, colors etc

III. Procedures for Learning Activities

Warm Up activity – the teacher will put up five sheets of paper around the room. The sheets will only have the name of the festival at the top. The five festivals are Diwali, Hanukkah, Loy Krathong, Kwanzaa and Los Posadas. The students will be invited to walk around the room and put down whatever, anything at all that they know about the festival.
The teacher will then show the PowerPoint which has pictures of each festivals and each slide has light in it…candles, lamps, firecrackers etc. At the end of the presentation she will ask the students to identify what was common to all the slides.

Once light is identified as the common feature there will be an open discussion on “Why light”. The teacher will elicit the views of the students on the meaning and importance of light.

The teacher will divide the students in to five groups and give each group a handout with facts about one particular festival. Each group will also get a blank grid to fill up. Each group has to read up and fill in the blanks related to “their” festival. They also have to draw or paint what lights up “their festival”.

IV. Assessment

Each group comes up and presents what they have found out about the festival they worked on. Other groups fill in the blanks in their grid. They explain their drawing of the special light and its name and meaning.

V. Differentiation

Students with different learning styles are engaged in the varied activities. They also do different things through the lesson so each student will have something of interest to work on.

VI. Reflection

Check to see if the students have understood the symbolic importance of light in a festival. They must also be able to note the commonalities in different religions. A connection must have been established between goodness and light. All students must have been engaged through various activities.
Lesson Plan 3

Intern: Sunita Biswas                                      Grade Level: 9
Title: Pollution                                          Date: ______________________________

Objectives

1. To make the students understand the definition, kinds and causes of pollution
2. To make the students aware of the effects of pollution, especially how it could impact them.
3. To help them look critically at human responsibility over the years
4. To help them look for solutions that would work, both locally and globally

Materials for Learning Activities

1. Film – An Inconvenient Truth by Al Gore, film viewing equipment
2. Poster papers
3. Whiteboard, markers, colors, pencils, erasers etc
4. Notebooks

Procedures for Learning Activities

Warm Up Activity – Brainstorming – teacher asks students what they see on the way to school. Then she asks them to think how each of those things could be a possible threat to the environment. All this is put up on the whiteboard.

The students then watch an excerpt from the film An Inconvenient Truth. After watching there is a brief discussion about what they saw and a linking up with they had discussed before watching the film.

Concept mapping - the class goes looks again at the whiteboard and lists all the threats into categories. Using think-pair-share methods they discuss definitions, causes effects, remedies. The teacher acts as a facilitator and puts up the concept map on the board. The students take the concept map down in their notebooks.
Assessment

The teacher divides the students into four groups. One group designs a poster; one group looks up the internet for facts and figures about pollution. The third group writes a short play script, and the last group creates a rap/song all on the same theme - creating awareness about pollution. Groups one and two now join hands for an artistic as well as a numerical representation of pollution. Groups three and four join together to put up the play. This will help the teacher to assess all the students.

Differentiation

As students learn differently according to Gardener’s theory of Multiple Intelligences, by structuring the assessment activities in this way the teacher will have addressed all the different intelligences and learning styles.

Reflection

The teachers will have to keep a close watch on the time and this lesson would be very good for a block activity but for shorter classes it may have to be broken up into two classes.

Lesson Plan - 4

Intern: Sunita Biswas  
Grade Level: 9  
Title: The Powerful Empires of India  
Date: 8th October 2008

I. Objectives

To give the students an understanding of the two major civilizations in ancient India, the Indus Valley and the Aryan civilizations, and two major empires, the Mauryas and the Guptas, that ruled the Indo-Gangetic plain. To reinforce their pre-existing knowledge that development happened in close proximity to rivers. To help them understand the unique
system of caste that developed at this time and to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of this system.

II. Materials for Learning Activities

Whiteboard,
World map (Physical),
OHP,
handouts/worksheets,
textbooks,
“butcher-paper”,
markers etc.

III. Procedures for Learning Activities

The lesson begins with a warm-up activity which has the students mark off dates on a timeline.

Then with the help of a physical map of the world the students identify the Hindu Kush, the Khyber Pass and the Himalayas.

This is followed by a PowerPoint showing slides of India. The teacher combines this with instruction about the Indus Valley civilization. She distributes worksheets with questions for the students to answer (they were mainly objective, so all that was required was filling in), with the help of the ppt clues.

IV. Assessment

The last part of the lesson was a jigsaw activity where students were divided into groups and each group took one part of the lesson and answered questions on butcher-paper which were then put up along with an explanation by the group.

V. Differentiation

No specific differentiation. All students did the assessment to the best of their abilities. Some better than the others. But all were equally applauded.

VI. Reflection

The students were able to attain the outcomes specified. They now had an understanding of the Indus valley and Aryan civilisations and were familiar with the Maurya and Gupta empires.
The lesson encompassed a lot. So it required a lot of compressing. Thus only a very brief overview or a half baked gist could be given. A couple of more lessons would have been better for a more complete understanding.
Lesson Plan 5

Intern: Sunita Biswas

Title: Martin Luther King and Gandhi: the Power of Non-violence

Date: 

I. Objectives

1. To examine the philosophy of nonviolence developed by Martin Luther King, Jr.
2. To consider how this philosophy translated into practice during the Civil Rights Movement.
3. To explore the relationship between King's teachings on nonviolence and those of Mohandas K. Gandhi.
4. To reflect on the relevance of nonviolence to one's personal conduct in everyday life.

II. Materials for Learning Activities

Photographs of Martin Luther King Jr and M.K. Gandhi
Photographs of non-violent protestors in India and the United States
Whiteboard, markers etc

III. Procedures for Learning Activities

The teacher will set the stage for this lesson by having students read a brief selection of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s writings on nonviolence and looking at photographs of nonviolent protest during the civil rights era. She will ask students to compare the practice of nonviolence, shown in the photographs, with the philosophy King outlines. The teacher will also have students review the selection of Gandhi's statements on "Satyagraha"
How do Gandhi's ideas compare to Dr. King's? Where does King seem to follow Gandhi's teachings, and where does he differ? Point out their agreement that nonviolence succeeds by transforming the relationship between antagonists and that its strength lies in the individual's commitment to truth and justice. Yet Gandhi seems to emphasize a need for personal suffering in the practice of nonviolence, a posture that is somewhat less militant than King's call to self-sacrifice. And there is a similar difference between Gandhi's belief that nonviolence achieves its goals through patience and non-cooperation and King's belief that it takes "creative tension" and a degree of confrontation to accomplish change. The teacher will remind students as they explore these two philosophies that their aim is not to decide who is right and who is wrong. Both Gandhi and King proved their ideas in practice by leading nonviolent social revolutions that shattered the law of oppression in their countries. While admiring them both, however, one can still recognize that they offer two approaches to the practice of nonviolence, one rooted in opposition, the other in protest.

IV. Assessment

The teacher will conclude the lesson by asking students to consider how nonviolence might be relevant to their own lives. To what degree can we practice this philosophy of social change at a personal level? Explore this question by staging a "talk show" in class. Two students play Gandhi and King as the day's guests and the teacher takes the role of talk show host herself. She might focus the discussion on violence in school, antagonism between groups of students, or interpersonal conflict. Have students in the "audience" describe situations in their lives that illustrate these issues, and have the "guests" offer practical suggestions for handling them. How do ideas like non-cooperation and creative tension, suffering and self-sacrifice translate into everyday actions? The teacher will follow-up these discussions by having students write a short essay on the philosophy of nonviolence and what we can learn from it today.

V. Differentiation

The lesson gives adequate scope for differentiation with a range of activities suited to many different learning styles.
VI. Reflection

Check to see if the desired learning outcomes have been achieved. Have the students understood the principles that motivated King and Gandhi? Can they identify and comprehend the differences? Are they able to understand the concept of nonviolence as a method/tool of protest?

It is unwise to be too sure of one’s own wisdom.

M.K. Gandhi
Title: Influence of society on environment

10/16/2008
Grade Level: 6

I. Objectives

Summarize the problem of influence of society on environment in the past; define how we use natural resources today; analyze the problem of the most efficient use of natural resources;

II. Procedures for Learning Activities

I divide class in groups and tell them to discuss a problem within groups.

Group 1: Plato said: "There were (in Attica) forests in the past but today just bees can find food on these mountains." Question: "What did Plato mean? What was the reason of change of environment?"

Group 2: A photo of modern Ur (Mesopotamia). Question: "There was a big city in the past, here is a desert today. What was the reason of change?"

Group 3: An emperor of Rome forbade private persons to kill lions in Northern Africa. Question: "Why did he order this?"

Group 4: Historical source of XVII century tells us: "Air is clean and fresh in other places but in London you can hardly see the sun and you can easily recognize this city by smell." Question: "Why did London have these problems?"

I ask each group to choose a leader for representing their opinion. (7 min.)

Then we listen to the leaders (the time-limit is 2 min. for each one) and I write briefly their conclusions on a blackboard: 1. diminishing of forests
2. Decrease of number of animals
3. Degradation of soil
4. Pollution of water and air (8 min.)

I tell students to count things that are necessary in their everyday life (and to explain briefly why they are necessary). I ask them: "what do we need to make these things?" I summarize their answers and write on the blackboard:

a) Natural resources
b) Factories

Questions: "Can you explain how we influence on environment when we make just one of these things that are necessary for us? a) What kind of sources of energy do we need for factories? b) How do we treat forests, animals, soil, air, water (or natural resources)? c) Compare the modern situation with the past."

(10 min.)

I gave each group a scheme with natural resources (resources are divided into renewable and non-renewable) and ask them: "what can we do? How to use natural resources, what can we change?" (They have to discuss this problem within the groups, find the best solution of it and represent their opinion.)

(10 min.)

We listen to the leaders (the time-limit is 2 min. for each one). Then summarize the results.
Homework: Man-the master or the protector of nature? (Write) (``Master`` is an owner who doesn’t care about results; ``protector`` is an owner who manages to use his goods and also protect them.)

III. Assessment

The first part of the lesson helps students (on the basic of their knowledge about occupation of a man in the past) to assess the influence of society on environment. In the second part they realize the importance of natural resources, the necessity of using them (or the influence of economy on environment). The third part gives them a chance to discuss different ways of the most efficient use of natural resources. The homework helps students to think over the problem of relationship between society and environment and to realize their own responsibility in making decision. It also helps me to check how they understand this problem.

George Mason University College of Education and Human Development, Center for International Education, Teaching Excellent and Achievement Project, Funded by IREX: U.S. Department of State/ECA

Lesson Plan Format

Intern: Mon Bahadur Chettri Grade Level: 11

Title: Weather and Climate Date: 23/10/08

I. Objectives

1. Students should be able to differentiate between weather and climate
2. Students should be able to identify and use the instruments which are used to measure the different elements of weather and climate.
3. Students should be able to understand the different elements of weather and climate

II. Materials for Learning Activities

Instruments used to measure the elements of weather and climate, weather maps, weather data collected by the students from newspapers and TV.
III. Procedures for Learning Activities

- The teacher will start the lesson with warm-up questions like, what do students feel about today’s weather. Is it raining outside? Etc.
- Now the teacher will tell them about the differences between weather and climate.
- He will teach the elements of weather and climate by showing the maps and instruments.
- He will also teach them the working of the different instruments and precautions to be taken while using the instruments.
- The teacher will teach the students the factors influencing the elements of weather and climate at different places of the earth.

IV. Assessment

1. Students will be asked to make thematic maps on Temperature, Rainfall and Humidity.
2. Students will be asked to collect the weather data from newspaper and TV for ten days and write a comparative study.
3. As part of the project work, students will be asked to make the instruments like windvane etc. and write information about them.
4. Short answer questions exercise will be given to the students.

V. Differentiation

1. Individual students should be given the instruments to study and handle.
2. Needs of the students will have to be kept in mind and kept pace accordingly.
3. Teacher will help students personally who cannot do the maps.
4. Extra time should be given to the students who are slow in understanding and learning.
5. The teacher should bring some newspapers to the class to show the students where to find weather report.

VI. Reflection

This is an activity based lesson which the students will enjoy. They will be surprised to know that in different parts of the earth there are so many factors which affect weather and climate. Two places may be thousands of miles away but
the weather and climate can be same or two places may be very near to each other but the weather and climate conditions can be drastically different.

Dakin (to Irwin, his teacher): Do you really believe that, sir, or are you just trying to make us think?

- A. Bennet (in "The History Boys")

LESSON STRATEGIES
Choose a method or strategy that you have learned about or observed during field experience.

1. Name of method or strategy:

**Socratic method of discussion or dialogue** Thus, the Socratic Method is a conversation, a discussion, wherein two or more people assist one another in finding the answers to difficult questions.

2. When is this method or strategy useful?

**The Socratic method is particularly good in the following cases**

- When a topic requires the students to use pre-existing knowledge to analyze a new topic,
- When the students need to arrive at an objective conclusion,
- When the students must critically study a development and its possible consequences.
3. **Why or how is this method or strategy useful?**

Despite his many claims of ignorance Socrates understood better than those with whom he spoke that it was not enough simply to "learn" facts, to memorize lessons, or to parrot lectures. To know truly, to seek wisdom, one must work toward understanding. If the question "what" leads us to see what we do and do not know, then the question "why" leads us to understand our world in a more full and fundamental manner. If a student tells you that Hitler signed a Non-aggression pact with Stalin in, he would, of course, be correct. But if you ask this student "why" this is so, would he be able to give you that answer? If he cannot, then he has memorized an "answer" that, while possessing certain utility, does not of itself provide understanding of causes. But if he gives any one of a number of reasoned explanations why, then he demonstrates not only his understanding of causes, but also the ability to communicate that understanding to others.

4. **What are the steps involved in using this strategy or method?**

Select appropriate and interesting material for discussion

Prepare the discussion questions (both open ended and closed) for the assigned topic or lead class in inquiry to create their own questions

Prior to the discussion, ask students to read the text, magazine article, or newspaper; watch the video; listen to the song; etc., and to record their answers to the questions which the teacher has developed

Set up the class and define procedures for Socratic Discussion by arranging the students in two concentric circles. The inner circle contains the speakers who will be involved in the discussion; each student must contribute. The outer circle contains the listeners. Students in the outer circle are not to speak, but only to listen to the discussion.

Students in the outer circle have the option of joining the inner circle when:
1) the discussion appears to be off topic.
2) The discussion becomes nonproductive with arguments and "put downs."
3) Inner circle members have not discussed an area deemed important.

5. **When would this method or strategy be useful in your setting?**

This would be good for encouraging critical thinking and discussion skills in one group and critical listening and evaluating skills in another. It is important to include debate with discussion because this method is very good for shared learning through discussion.

6. **What would you like other teachers in your school to know about this method or strategy?**
The Socratic Questioning technique is an effective way to explore ideas in depth. It can be used at all levels and is a helpful tool for all teachers. It can be used at different points within a unit or project. By using Socratic Questioning, teachers promote independent thinking in their students and give them ownership of what they are learning. Higher-level thinking skills are present while students think, discuss, debate, evaluate, and analyze content through their own thinking and the thinking of those around them. These types of questions may take some practice on both the teacher and students’ part since it may be a whole new approach.

Portfolio Strategy 2

Choose a method or strategy that you have learned about or observed during field experience.

1. Name of method or strategy:

Using primary sources in the teaching of history.

2. When is this method or strategy useful?

Almost always to bring history alive! Provided the relevant primary resource is readily available. It is a great teaching tool to motivate students and make them feel involved in the historical process.

3. Why or how is this method or strategy useful?

It develops the habits of mind that historians and social scientists employ to study the past and its relationship to the present;
Students learn intellectual reasoning, reflection, and research skills;
It promotes an understanding of research, evidence, and point of view.
It develops historical interpretation.

4. What are the steps involved in using this strategy or method?

Preview and select content
Prepare handout materials
Provide guidance in class discussions
Instruct students in reading comprehension strategies-
Design activities to test interpretational skills.

5. When would this method or strategy be useful in your setting?

This method would be particularly good for creating interest and motivating the students.
It would bring in diversity and encourage diversified learning.

6. What would you like other teachers in your school to know about this method or strategy?

Historic records can be used in a variety of ways in the classroom. Some suggestions would be:

- As a way to integrate interdisciplinary learning across a wide range of curriculum issues.
- As a hook to capture the interest of students at the beginning of a lesson.
- As a point maker in the middle of a lesson
- As the central theme or focus of a lesson.
- As a surprise reward at the end of a lesson.
- To provide valuable data or context for a lesson.
- As a way to make learning more fun for the students.
- As a way to make teaching more fun for the teacher.

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George Mason University College of Education and Human Development, Center for International Education
Teaching Excellent and Achievement Project
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Portfolio Strategy 3
Choose a method or strategy that you have learned about or observed during field experience.

1. Name of method or strategy:

KWLH

2. When is this method or strategy useful?

It is very useful at the beginning of a topic or unit and serves as a very good warm up activity. Sometimes it is difficult for the student to understand what he/she is reading. This can be extremely frustrating for students. To help them understand what they are reading, students can be guide through this strategy of learning so that they know exactly what to look for.

3. Why or how is this method or strategy useful?

This strategy is useful because it promotes independence in thinking and learning. It can help the students to focus and be motivated. The questions elicit children’s prior knowledge, pique their curiosity about a topic, and support research, motivating students to seek answers for their questions in other texts.

4. What are the steps involved in using this strategy or method?

A. "Know" Step:

1. Initiate discussion with the students about what they already know about the topic of the text.
2. Start by using a brainstorm procedure. Ask the students to provide information about where and how they learned the information.
3. Help them organize the brainstormed ideas into general categories.

B. "Want to Learn" Step:

1. Discuss with the students what they want to learn from reading an article.
2. Ask them to write down the specific questions in which they are more interested.

C. "What I Learned" Step:

1. Ask the students to write down what they learned from the reading.
2. Ask them to check the questions they had generated in the "Want to Learn" Step.
5. **When would this method or strategy be useful in your setting?**

When the students have some prior knowledge about the topic and are going to take up something new based on it. Also when I want them to focus on what exactly they should learn from a vast or comparatively complicated unit. Or maybe when I want them to be aware of precisely what they need to know.

6. **What would you like other teachers in your school to know about this method or strategy?**

This strategy can be used with a group of diverse learners. This strategy allows students of varying abilities to increase their knowledge about a topic and give them ownership in the classroom.

This educational strategy also allows students of varying learning styles to extend their knowledge in the classroom. It provides a visual way to discuss sometimes abstract concepts and allows students to communicate their thoughts both in small and large group discussions.

This is particularly relevant for teachers in my school because we have so many diverse learners and so many learning styles.

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**George Mason University College of Education and Human Development, Center for International Education, Teaching Excellent and Achievement Project**

**Funded by IREX-U.S. Department of State/ ECA**

**Portfolio Strategy Sheet 4**

Choose a method or strategy that you have learned about or observed during field experience.

1. **Name of method or strategy:**

Cooperative learning - Jigsaw

2. **When is this method or strategy useful?**
When teaching larger groups or groups with varying learning aptitudes

3. Why or how is this method or strategy useful?

It breaks up the content into easy-to-tackle chunks and makes each group focus on a specific chunk. It addresses the whole topic in its entirety and enables a clear understanding of the Big Picture.

4. What are the steps involved in using this strategy or method?

The students are divided into pairs or groups. Each pair or group has to read up or do research on a particular part of the topic and then answer questions that follow. The teacher may or may not assign roles to the group members like one person to read up, one person to write and two to present to the class. The group will put down its findings/answers on a poster and give a presentation before the class.

5. When would this method or strategy be useful in your setting?

This strategy would be useful to reach out to those students who are in general non-participatory in class, or who need the moral support of a group/team to come forward. It would encourage the normally participatory students to take charge of the performance of the team as a whole.

6. What would you like other teachers in your school to know about this method or strategy?

Other teachers would also be able to use this strategy to engage learners with different aptitudes and encourage the students to work and learn as a team.
He who is ashamed of asking is ashamed of learning.

- Anonymous Danish Proverb

**SHARED STRATEGIES...**
Choose a method or strategy that you have learned about or observed during field experience.

Name of method or strategy:

How to use library and how to search for information in internet.

When is this method or strategy useful?

It’s very important to collect information.

Why or how is this method or strategy useful?

It’s useful to know how to find the appropriate book, which site is reliable…
What are the steps involved in using this strategy or method?

First students are informed about different kind of informational resources
Then teacher explains how to search for books, magazines, websites
They discuss what kind of informational resources are reliable.

What would you like other teachers in your school to know about this method or strategy?
I’d like my colleagues to know how to inform students about searching for information.

George Mason University, College of Education and Human Development, Center for International Education
Teaching Excellence and Achievement Project
Funded by IREX-U.S. Department of State/ECA
Portfolio Strategy Sheet
– Mon Bahadur Chettri, India

Choose a method or strategy that you have learned about or observed during field experience.

Name of method or strategy:
Mind Mapping

When is this method or strategy useful?
When the teacher wants to find out the prior knowledge of the students.

Why or how is this method or strategy useful?
This strategy very quickly tells a teacher how much the children already know and hence helps plan his lesson. It also enables the teacher to teach from the general to the more specific.

What are the steps involved in using this strategy or method?
The teacher gives the general topic and writes it on the board. He then asks the children for some issues related to it and writes them on the board, linking them to the main
The teacher then divides the class into groups and gives each a chart and a marker. The teacher asks the students to think on each subtopic and chart a mind map. The teacher draws an example on the board to make the activity clear to the students. Children are given only about 10 to 15 minutes to completes the mind map.

5. **When would this method or strategy be useful in your setting?**
   This method can be effectively used while starting a new topic to know the prior knowledge or at the end of a lesson as part of summarization or recapitulation. It can reinforce learning.

6. **What would you like other teachers in your school to know about this method or strategy?**
   The teachers of other subjects can also use this strategy successfully for the above mentioned purposes.

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*Choose a method or strategy that you have learned about or observed during field experience.*

**Name of method or strategy:**
My mentor has learning centers in her classroom.

**When is this method or strategy useful?**
This method is used in each class.

**Why or how is this method or strategy useful?**
As I observed, this strategy is very effective. In one class students practice all four skills.

**What are the steps involved in using this strategy or method?**
In each center there are different tasks prepared by the teacher beforehand. In class students in pair or small groups go to work in different centers for 10-15 minutes. Then they switch. So by the end of the class each of the students has worked in each center.

When would this method or strategy be useful in your setting?
I think this method is very effective in my classroom setting. I am planning to try it in my class.

What would you like other teachers in your school to know about this method or strategy?
As soon as I go back to my school, I will share this method with other teachers and I think they will be very interested to use it in their classes.

The key to realizing a dream is to focus not on success but significance ...

Oprah Winfrey-

INTERNSHIP
Internship- some reflections, some observations!

I visited JEB Stuart High School in Falls Church Virginia twice every week during the five weeks I spent at George Mason University along with eight other participants from our team. I was assigned to the Social Studies department. My mentor Pam Martinov is the department chair. She is a wonderful person with a wealth of knowledge. I observed a range of classes and many different strategies and programs while I was there.

JEB Stuart has a very diverse student community with a sizeable chunk of Hispanics. In fact there are 644 native speakers of Spanish as against 542 native speakers of English!! A high school in the United States has Freshmen (grade 9), Sophomores (grade10), Juniors (grade11), and Seniors (grade 12). In all the school has around 1642 students this year. It’s a huge school with different subjects (‘departments”) assigned to different floors/wings.

As a visitor I observed many things that were both similar and different. The classroom dynamics were much the same. The teacher worked hard to motivate and engage her students. Teenage behavior was not really that different. The bell signifying the end of a class is greeted with equal joy!!
However there were many differences. The most striking one for me, and for my fellow participants from other countries, was that the teacher stays put in her room and the students go from class to class according to the timetable. This has big advantages because the teacher can then set up the classroom to create the right learning environment suited to the subject she teaches. Lessons automatically become more effective that way. Also, most schools have periods, or blocks as they are called which last 90 minutes. We tend to make a face when we get a “double period” at home but this visit taught me that one cannot implement really worthwhile strategies in a 45 minute lesson.

Other differences that I had expected, based on hearsay knowledge, like lack of discipline, were both true and false. It is true that the student can open up a packet of chips and start munching in the middle of working on an assignment. It does not happen all the time, but it does happen…and when it does happen the teacher believes it’s better for the student to eat if he/she is hungry or he/she won’t be able to work anyway. I can’t buy that one! On the other hand when the students focus, they really focus…when they work, they really work. They maybe ripples of talk all around the classroom but it’s very much constructive noise. The assignment is getting done, the students are learning. Another thing I noticed is the generous sprinkling of humour. The teacher-student relationship is casual and friendly, but within limits.

I came prepared to find a lot of technology being used in the classroom…and it is. From television to OHPs to computer, technology is a major aid to teaching-learning. Other resources at the teacher’s disposal are also very impressive…from drop-down maps to shelves stacked with the most wonderful resource books.

These differences apart, one thing really that impressed me was the amount of thinking, planning and resources that are spent on career counseling and guidance. There are separate departments looking after this. Classes are held regularly to help the student do his/her own research to choose the right university. Professionals from different fields visit regularly to talk to the students. Officials from different universities come and answer any questions the students may have. All this under the school roof, during the school day, free of cost. By the time the student reaches grade 12 he/she knows what course, where and how and chances are the applications have also been sent out. One major difference here is that there is NO concept of tuitions. Instead I saw something really heartening at Stuart High School. Because of the large Hispanic crowd ESOL classes are very necessary, and an intrinsic part of the timetable, but sometimes they are not enough. So there are AVID classes where the students identify their weak areas and work with their peers to teach and help each other in an informal yet focused way! Again within school hours, as part of the timetable!
Afterword…

A for apple is where we all began…and, as teachers, probably still begin!

However the apple is also the symbol of school education in America. I knew that already. What I did not know was why. And the explanation, which I learnt during the course of this program, as a chance remark, is something I will cherish and value forever.

An apple is delicious! It’s juicy and sweet and we get a lot out of it…goodness and taste. But when we are done with eating it we throw it away and the seeds are left to scatter. And from those seeds grow many more apple trees for many more people to enjoy! And then more seeds.…

…and that is the exponential truth for any educator!
And right at the end of the program I found the antidote to the quip by Shaw, with which I began this presentation, and which always made me feel a little inadequate. I learnt that many years before Shaw said, ‘Those who can do, those who can’t teach!’, Aristotle had said, “Those that know, do. Those that understand, teach.

It left a warm and fuzzy feeling!