

Lesson Plan Development

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Presenting my very first lesson plan was a very positive and motivating experience. The experience reinforced my decision to go into special education. The students that I taught were very positive and enthusiastic. I also found myself falling into the class participation with ease. I had expected the lesson not to go as smoothly as it did, but I was pleasantly surprised with the outcome from my students and myself. I was able to give my lesson on St. Patrick's Day and design the lesson accordingly. The lesson included many aspects, such as academic standards, objectives, activities, and co-teaching strategies.

I gave my lesson at Northside Middle School in Ms. Alison Jackson's room. The class that I instructed was an eighth grade English Enrichment class and it contained fifteen students. Because the class is an English class, I chose to base my lesson on reading comprehension. The lesson academic objective was "Students will read and comprehend the article presented to them. They will be able to answer seven out of ten questions when asked about textual evidence from the reading." The students were asked to read an article, and answer comprehension questions following the reading. The students were also instructed to write a summary over the article. Having the students participate in these activities insured that I would completely cover the Indiana Academic Standard 8.RN.2.2. This standard is as follows, "Analyze the development of a central idea over the course of a text including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide a detailed, objective summary of the text" (Indiana Department of Education, 2014). I also set a behavioral objective for my students. The objective for them was, "Students will follow along when the article is being read allowed by their peers with only one reminder

at the beginning of the reading.” The lesson and objectives were met by using an effective co-teaching strategy.

Ms. Jackson and I decided upon a specific co-teaching strategy during the preparation for the lesson. We chose to use the strategy “One Teach, One Assist.” This strategy was chosen because it provides the least disruption in the students’ routine. The students are accustomed to having an additional adult in the room circulating and providing assistance as needed. The students do their best work when there is a routine and pattern in place. The roles of each of us were decided based upon this observation. I, the lead teacher, would be responsible for presenting and teaching the reading comprehension lesson. It was my responsibility to engage the students in the activities as well as ask the class comprehensive questions to ensure understanding. Ms. Jackson took the role as the assisting teacher. Her responsibilities included circulating the room to check the students for understanding, and provide additional explanation if needed. It was the responsibility of both teachers to keep students on track with the behavioral objective and general attentiveness. This strategy was effective, and gave myself the opportunity to properly execute the planned lesson, transitions, activities, and closure.

The lesson began with the students transitioning from their daily class introduction assignment. Every day the class is given an activity called a “bell ringer” as they enter the classroom. The students understand that once the bell ringer is collected, it is time for the lesson to begin. After the collection of the bell ringer, I began my motivational activity. This consisted of asking the class to share, by raising their hands, what they knew about St. Patrick’s Day. I asked the students to share what they knew and what they did to celebrate the holiday. This activity promoted students to begin thinking

about the subject matter, as well as a chance for myself to evaluate their prior knowledge on the topic. I followed this activity up with an introduction the lesson, and an explanation of the schedule for the class.

The second activity for my lesson was reading an article with the class. The title of the article was, "*The History of St. Patrick's Day*" (Hello Kids, 2006). I began the activity by telling the class that we were going to take turns reading the article as a class. This was the time that I stated the behavioral objective to the class. I began the reading by reading the first paragraph, and then I called on a student to read. The students called upon one another to read each paragraph until the article was finished. Between each paragraph of reading, I stopped the students and asked them comprehensive questions. The questions that I asked were over information that had just been read aloud and contained textual evidence. The purpose of this was to insure that the students had a thorough understanding of the text and that they were retaining the information that they read. At the end of the reading, I asked students to share something that they had learned while reading the article. I used these questions and answers to introduce and transition into the culminating activity.

The culminating activity was used as an evaluation of the students' comprehension of the article. I gave the students a worksheet with ten questions. These questions were based off the reading and asked students to look back in the text to find the answers. This worksheet was completed together as a class. I asked for volunteers to read each question, and then called on a student to answer the question. In addition, the students were asked to state what paragraph in which they found their answer. The pattern of reading the questions allowed, and answering them as a class continued until

the worksheet was finished. Upon completion of the worksheet, students were asked to recall the format they had been taught to use when writing a summary.

The follow-up homework activity was the final activity of my lesson. The students were reminded of the correct format in which to write a summary, and I gave them a half sheet of paper including the prompt for the summary. I informed the class that the assignment was due the following day. When there was only a few minutes remaining, I began the closure to my lesson. I asked the class if they learned anything new that day, and I asked them if they were going to celebrate the holiday. The class was active with answers, and the class ended with many shouts of “Happy St. Patrick’s Day!”

I feel my lesson was successful, and that my teaching was effective. I was pleased that the students were eager to answer the questions that I asked and kept a positive attitude throughout the class. The summaries that were written by the students reflected their active participation. When I received the homework assignments, I was pleased to read that the students wrote an appropriate summary, and were able to share what they learned in an appropriate manner. The majority of the students answered all of the questions on the summary prompt, so the biggest issue was language mechanics. I am also pleased to say that the class was able to meet their behavioral objective completely. I did not have to remind any students to follow along during the reading. While I was more than pleased with the results of my lesson, I found a few areas that need improvement. I need to work on my time management during my lesson. The lesson activities that I had planned were completed much quicker than I had intended. I also need to improve on keeping the students’ attention during transition times. During these times the students

got somewhat distracted and off task. Ms. Jackson's feedback agreed with the things that I felt I needed to improve upon as well. Her biggest advice for future lesson planning was that I needed to always plan extra or back up work so that I do not leave the students time to entertain themselves. I agree with her feedback, and I will definitely follow it in the future.

This experience with teaching my own lesson plan gave me the opportunity to reflect on my strengths and weaknesses as a developing teacher. My activities, objectives, and standards were all executed as planned. I appreciated the advice of my classroom teacher and the reactions I received from my students. I look forward to future experiences in planning and teaching my own lesson, as I know there will be many.

References

Hello Kids. (2006). *History of St. Patrick's Day*. Retrieved from HelloKids.com:
<http://www.hellokids.com/reading-and-learning/stories-for-children/stpatricksdays-history>

Indiana Department of Education. (2014, June 10). *Indiana Academic Standards: English/Language Arts*. Retrieved from Indiana Department of Education Website: <http://www.doe.in.gov/standards/englishlanguage-arts>