

Differentiated Strategies for Instruction and Assessment

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EDUC 673 Curriculum and Methods for Effective Instruction

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Title of Sample Lesson Plan: Writing for workplace or postsecondary use

Topic: English

Grade Level: Twelfth grade

Virginia Standard of Learning:

12.6 The student will develop expository and informational, analyses, and persuasive/argumentative writings.

- a) Generate, gather, and organize ideas for writing to address a specific audience and purpose.
- b) Produce arguments in writing that develop a thesis to demonstrate knowledgeable judgments, address counterclaims, and provide effective conclusions.
- c) Clarify and defend a position with precise and relevant evidence.
- d) Adapt content, vocabulary, voice, and tone to audience, purpose, and situation.
- e) Use a variety of rhetorical strategies to accomplish a specific purpose.
- f) Create arguments free of errors in logic and externally supported.
- g) Revise writing for clarity of content, depth of information and technique of presentation.
- h) Use computer technology to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing.

Differentiating by Readiness**Background**

Proposed Background: In order to differentiate by readiness, the teacher needs to know what level the students are at when beginning the lesson. Since the teacher will likely have had the students for other classes before this class, the teacher will probably already have an idea where

they are at. However, if the teacher does not already have a background knowledge of the students' level, the teacher will need to evaluate the students' writing abilities, which can be done through quick formative assessments or even just looking at the students' previous work.

Strategies

Content Strategies:

One content strategy that could be used with this lesson plan is that of Jigsaw groups (McCarthy, 2014a). To incorporate the jigsaw groups into the lesson, student groups can be assigned to research application letters or cover letters and report back to their groups. Some aspects of cover letter formats that the student groups may research could include general formatting options of how the letter should look. Student groups could also research appropriate signature verbiage.

Process Strategies:

One process strategy that is already incorporated into the lesson is that of peer review and edit (Virginia Department of Education, 2010). By reviewing their peers' work, the students will be able to process another way of writing the document and also be able to process their own learning.

Another process strategy is also included in the content strategy of Jigsaw groups (McCarthy, 2014a). When the students come back to their groups to discuss the information that they researched it, they will be actively processing what they learned in their research.

Product Strategies:

Although the lesson is designed specifically for students to learn how to write an application letter or cover letter, the students will have the option to choose how it looks and how they format it. As some jobs may even cater towards a specific preference of formatting, students

will be encouraged to research and find the best formatting for the specific job they are writing the letter for.

Students will also be given the opportunity to choose a different project to demonstrate their professional writing skills. Although the preference is that the students will write a job application or cover letter, if any students would like to choose another option that would demonstrate the same skills, and the teacher approves it, they will be allowed to complete it as an alternative.

Differentiating by Interest

Background

Proposed Background: As each student is an individual with unique interests, they will be more engaged if the lesson is connected somehow to something they are interested in. as McCarthy (2014c) pointed out, teaching at the students' readiness levels combined with their interests leads to the students becoming more engaged in the learning processes. If students do not feel a connection to their schooling, they likely will have no interest in it and not engage much (McCarthy, 2014c). It is vital, then, for the teacher to learn what the interests of the students are in order to connect their interests to the content.

Strategies

Content Strategies:

Once the teacher knows what the students' interests are, the teacher can intentionally connect those interests to the lesson content. In this lesson, the students' interests are already connected as they direct the project. The class discusses their interests for future employment options. Once they have discussed and identified those interests, they research those same interests, and use the information to write their letter.

For students who are not sure what they job would be interested in doing for the project, the teacher can provide employment option menus. Some menus can have more generic job categories for students to pick from. However, it would be particularly helpful for the students to identify a general job category and be able to review an employment option menu with a listing of jobs that fit in that category. Of course, the lists will not be exhaustive but can give students who are struggling with a job selections some options to choose from.

Process Strategies:

For the Jigsaw groups that students will be using to research, they can be broken up into groups based on their job interest (McCarthy, 2014a). This will help the students to work together on researching on a topic that they are collectively interested in. Another process strategy would be when the students begin their peer review. It can be done based on interest as well. Students can be assigned to review the work of classmates who wrote their letter regarding similar jobs.

Product Strategies:

As students write their letters, they will be encouraged to tell the readers about themselves, though in a professional manner, and their interests. In addition, as discussed previously, the letter formatting will not be expected to look a specific way. Students will have the ability to personalize the formatting, provided it still looks professional or meets with the expectations of the job category that the student is writing it for.

While it is expected that most students will eventually need an application letter or cover letter at some point in their lives, some may choose not to seek employment in a way that would require this type of letter. As a result, some students may prefer not to write an application letter

or cover letter. Those students will be able to discuss alternatives with the teacher and choose another applicable writing project.

Differentiating by Student Profile

Background

Proposed Background: As the students would likely have been taught by the same teacher previous to this lesson, the teacher may already be aware of their learning profiles. However, it may still be beneficial for the teacher to work on determining each students' learning profile. There are many ways to evaluate a student's learning profile, including thinking styles and multiple intelligences (McCarthy, 2014b). McCarthy (2014b) mentions some specific options, such as TrueColors and Myers-Briggs.

Strategies

Content Strategies:

McCarthy (2014b) points out that it can be helpful to plan lessons that include multiple dimensions. This type of lesson would help with teaching students of various learning profiles. This lesson is already laid out with somewhat varied learning aspects. Students start with classroom discussion, followed by research and writing. This would include some aspects for different learning types.

As discussed in some previous sections, there is room to include Jigsaw groups in the class (McCarthy, 2014a). This Jigsaw group could also help differentiate for different learning profiles (McCarthy, 2014b). It would help with the varied dimensions in the classroom as mentioned earlier (McCarthy, 2014b). The students would not only be listening to a lecture, but they would be actively researching and then sharing with their classmates (McCarthy, 2014b).

Process Strategies:

While it would be a content strategy, the Jigsaw groups would also be a processing strategy (McCarthy, 2014a). As discussed in previous sections, the students returning to share with their group what they learned is a way that the students can process what they learned.

Product Strategies:

Although the letters re intended to be professional, that does not mean that they have to just be black and white. The students would have the choice on what their letter will look like. They would be allowed to make their letters colorful and creative, if they would like. Or if they would prefer, they could keep the plain, traditional, black and white format.

As noted in previous sections, the students would be allowed to choose. If a student would like to choose a different type of professional paper, the student has that option. The student would, however, have to suggest an alternate option to the teacher, and the teacher would have to approve it. Since the point of the lesson is regarding professional writing, the final product would need to be a professional paper, but there are options besides the cover letter or application letter that is specified in the lesson

Assessment Response

There really is only one assessment that would work for the lesson, and it was built right into the lesson. I really did not create it. I only compiled and wrote the specifics for evaluating it. In order to determine if the students can write in a professional manner, the students will have to actually write the letter. By reviewing the students' letters, the teacher will be able to determine if the students are meeting the requirements of the standard.

References

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