Teacher Work Sample
Exemplars

Contextual Factors

TWS Standard: The teacher uses information about the learning/teaching context and student individual differences to set learning goals, plan instruction, and assess learning.

Community, school, and classroom factors: Festus High School is located in the mid-eastern area of Missouri, and the city of Festus claims a total population of 14,900 people. The average family income for this area is $49,528, with over two hundred families living below poverty level. It is a largely Caucasian community (ninety-four percent) with a three percent African American, two percent Asian, and one percent Native American population. Its public school district serves a student population of 2,912 students, with 243 of them identified as ninth graders in the high school where I will be teaching. Festus is a stable, conservative, working-class community that exhibits support for education through its hopeful plans for a new high school to be completed by 2009. (DESE)

The classroom where I will be teaching is part of a somewhat older building (built in the 1960s), but retains an equitable amount of space for instruction. There are twenty-seven student desks, two teacher desks, a television, VCR, overhead projector, bookshelves, a table, and two window-unit
The students thrive academically during artistic, kinesthetic, visual, and audio presentations of material. It is felt by the classroom teacher that these students will not usually complete assigned homework outside of the classroom, especially if it entails a large amount of reading, therefore much of the work is completed during the class hour. They generally have instructions read to them for clarification or the students take turns reading the instructions aloud, and several assignment questions are handled as a class before they are told to complete the work independently. Prior to the unit I will be teaching, the
students will be working on a unit focused on plot diagramming, summarization, and some literary terminology within two short stories, “The Cask of Amontillado” and “The Most Dangerous Game.” They seem to be reaching the grade-level expectations in the aforementioned concepts according to the mostly average and above average scores.

**Instructional implications:** As I design instruction and assess learning within my unit, I will need to acknowledge the socio-economic level of my students, since more than a few students come from low-income households with little parental involvement. Many will not have easy access to computers or assistance from other adults outside of the room, so they will need time in the classroom to complete assignments. Reading some or most of a literary assignment (short story) to the class or allowing them chances to read the material out loud may help them understand the material better, and I should allot time for that task. This should also give the students time to ask questions when they are unsure of what to do. Video and audio presentations of learning material will be imperative, and I have contacted the librarian about using some digital technology including an overhead digital projector and Ken-a-vision camera that projects a printed page on the television. I plan to also utilize the traditional overhead projector as well. I will attempt to integrate some independent work outside of the classroom to encourage some autonomous responsibility. I will also utilize the classroom’s design to form easily-arranged cooperative learning groups in order to complete certain assignments in class. At times, I will need to
monitor the temperature of the classroom since it is not thermostatically controlled, and comfort adds to the learning environment. My goal is to aid in continuing the students’ success in their previous learning endeavors.

Works Cited


Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Website.  