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Teaching:

An Exploration of Best Practices

By Timothy Pickle

An Action Research Project submitted to Western Oregon University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of:

Master of Arts, in Teaching

July 2022



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**WE, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF THE GRADUATE FACULTY OF  
WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY HAVE EXAMINED THE ENCLOSED**

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**Action Research Project Title:**

Teaching: An Exploration of Best-Practices

**Graduate Student:** Timothy Picke

**Candidate for the degree of:** Master of Arts in Teaching: Initial Licensure

*and hereby certify that in our opinion it is worthy of acceptance as partial fulfillment  
of the requirements of this master's degree.*

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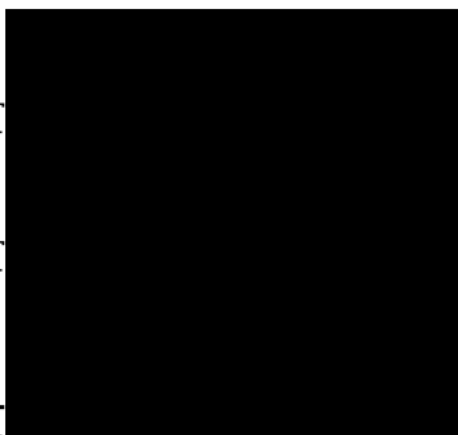
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## Abstract

The purpose of this Action Research Project as part of the fulfillment of my Master of Arts in Teaching degree is to become aware of my teaching practices and to explore options and avenues to better improve my teaching practices. To build a foundation of understanding of teaching practices I first began researching three major themes: effective teaching, evidence-based practices, and developing stronger readers in an ELA classroom; I also sought examples of how I could implement them into my practice . The research begins with an examination of what differentiation is and how it can be modeled. Three sub-themes emerged: designing differentiation, supporting English Language Learners, and how to create inclusive classrooms. Second, my research focuses on identifying the major theme of evidence-based practices by focusing on three sub-themes: high leverage practices, effective instruction in the ELA classroom, and how to create student-centered classrooms. Lastly, because I know that reading is usually a strong indicator for student ability in an ELA classroom, I sought out ways to help develop students into stronger readers. The three sub-themes that arose from this research were using literature circles, technology, and reading identity. I gathered data from my year of student teaching including my teaching journals, lesson plans, lesson materials such as slides or assignments and directions, and teaching observation summaries. Using this data, I analyzed my teaching practices, noting where I had room for growth or had met some of my goals.

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## Chapter I

### Introduction:

In the traditional viewpoint of the teacher, teachers were seen as repositories of information. The students were merely required to listen to them, and their teachers would deposit information into their brains much as we deposit our paychecks into the bank. Otherwise termed as the “banking concept” Freire (1970). Freire states that this concept is antithetical to learning as it treats students as passive receivers instead of active participants. I remember much of my K-12 years spent in the dull reality of waiting for information to be sprinkled out, deposited here and there like checks into an ATM. In my K-12 years, Math was the rote memorization of formula, with little thought to what they represented in real-life; English was the rote understanding of the ‘standard’ with the scripting of essays in dull linear format. Ultimately this centered learning as a circular and artificial product removing the act of learning – a process of practice and discovery, and student ownership – into ready-made “meals” that the student neither chose nor ordered, but was forced to digest. It created little opportunities for us to engage in hands-on learning, a necessary ingredient for student success. I believe teachers must be someone who inspires others to learn through their assistance rather than a banker depositing sums of knowledge in students’ minds. An effective teacher creates opportunities for students to engage and enables them to gain better understandings and accomplishments. Teachers are effective when they understand that learning and teaching are a simultaneous and natural action as Smith (1998) argues, an existence of relationship akin to that between an apprentice to their master: observers of craft and wisdom. Aside from the direct connection between student and teacher, another mentor that students can access in ELA are *mentor texts*. Mentor texts demonstrates the accuracy of Smith’s model of teaching and learning. A mentor text is a sample of writing or work of writing that models a

particular writing task (e.g., sample grant proposals or successful philosophies of teaching). Mentor texts when assigned engage students in self-ownership of their learning, involving them in the act of learning as opposed to the “banking concept” decried by Freire (1970).

While mentor texts are important for student ownership, teachers still retain their role of mentors to their students. Learning is a frame of mind and practice that requires models for students to identify and model for emulation. Teachers model the behavior they wish students to emulate. We model the behaviors we wish our students to learn because our role as a teacher is more than just instilling content knowledge. We must also facilitate the students in learning the “hidden curriculum,” the socio-cultural mores of their society that all teachers implicitly proscribe and practice while teaching students (Apple & King, 1977). Therefore, an effective teacher departs the socio-cultural mores and provides a model to their students, creating authentic opportunities to learn rather than practicing the wrongheaded model of depositing information.

### Teaching: The Relationship between Teacher and Student

The role of the teacher is an important one. They can influence or shape the outcomes of students by how well or ill prepared they are for each lesson. While I believe it is important for each teacher to be well-prepared, having gathered information related to their materials and anticipating student questions, I don't believe that teachers should be seen as source of all information. Au (2011) calls this the “New Taylorism” based on the “Taylorism” industrialization organization model in which the manager (teacher) tells the worker (students) how they should accomplish a task and how long it should take them. Instead, I believe that teaching is the act of helping someone learn some new piece of information, a new viewpoint, or

some ability. For this paradigm, teaching is done by anyone who can share new information: students, janitors, parents, siblings, or others. Everyone can teach something to someone.

Therefore, our job is not to teach the what; we have to teach the why. Why should the students want to be taught by us? Why should they want to learn what we are teaching? That is why I believe that teaching is an active activity. If the teacher must actively engage students in the new information, then the students must actively agree to engage with the teacher to acquire the new information every day. Part of what makes students agree to this is whether they feel a sense of success. The best way to teach our students to feel this success is by utilizing the practice of scaffolding.

Scaffolding is for teaching, as training wheels are for learning to ride a bike. Scaffolding is the necessary element that makes teaching possible. Our goal as teachers is to assist students in mastering the necessary content, but as Ormrod (2020) notes, students are most likely to disengage from teaching if they lack success expectations. Our job in teaching is for them to feel this ability to be successful. Adults of all kinds teach children things every day. For example, when we greet people by name, we teach them that we see them as individuals showing them respect. Additional requirements of scaffolding are from the sheer diversity that is happening in our classrooms. As Berchini (2014) states, “many of the preservice teachers... are learning to teach in classrooms with racially, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse student populations” (p. 249). The sheer changing diversity of students, something I’ve seen in many of the classrooms in the Salem-Keizer schools and in the Springfield Public Schools here in Oregon, means that teachers must reckon with adapting their lessons to address and welcome all types of students.

Similarly, the behaviors we allow also teach others how to behave around us. If we ignore or allow negative behavior from students, we teach them that it is okay not to pay attention to us. They have then been taught that patterns of actions are okay around us. Teaching and learning happen all around us, and teachers must acknowledge the critical teaching and learning in their classroom.

### What is the nature of learning?

A teacher can go to great depths, planning for what they consider is every variable to craft a thoughtful lesson. They would include interesting facts, topics, and tasks. Nevertheless, disaster or success then happens. Learning is something outside of the domain of the teacher. As teachers, we can support students' ability to learn by recognizing information that they require, but ultimately learning happens only when the learner is ready to understand the content. Therefore, ultimately, learning results directly from the information being presented at the right time. The right time is never precisely 1:1 for every student because students have their own right moment when learning happens.

Nevertheless, that does not excuse the teacher's lack of planning; instead, it demands that the teacher recognize the moments when the students are ready to learn. Learning then is the delicate and intricate task of preparing for every outcome: success and failure. Moreover, it involves repeating information until students can recognize how it fits into old schemas (Ormrod, 2020). In other words, learning only occurs for students when the knowledge is presented at the moment in which their innate level of readiness for the concept is obtainable through developmental readiness or development plus scaffolding (Piaget; Vygotsky).

We cannot expect our students to learn something at the snap of our fingers. Learning requires diligence and constant effort, usually over a span of days rather than in a flash of insight. Therefore, if learning takes a long time, it should be obvious that teaching takes time. Successful teaching considers that students' self-perceptions or abilities change slowly – neither overnight nor after one exercise (Ormrod, 2020). I find that learning is an ongoing practice of accomplishment and effort, requiring multiple assessment methods of student understanding and processing of new information.

Our students are learning something new every day as well. Ideally, students are learning key concepts of our disciplines, in English language arts, and hopefully learning the skills of persistence and negotiating for understanding. In the language arts classroom, we read literature. Literature, however, can be books, poems, directions, and informational texts. In every instance, students have to gain the ability to identify and respond to questions of the text as they read. Aside from our students, we as teachers learn new information every day - if we pay attention. For example, we can learn a lot from our students if we pay attention: do they understand our initial lesson plans, enjoy, or engage in the learning, and what caused the learning to break down or stop. When we learn from our students, our lessons become richer.

### My Philosophy from Theory to Practice

I find value from different learning theories: Behaviorist, Social Cognitive, and Cognitive. The Behaviorist model of learning identifies learning as being obtained by a change in a person's behavior upon encountering stimulus (Ormrod, 2020). Teachers look to Behaviorist theory to address and understand changes in students every day concerning classroom routines and expectations. I have a list of expectations and routines for students to accomplish each day. The expectations cover terms of acceptable behaviors in the classroom. For example, I expect

that rude language, disruptions, and getting out of their seats are behaviors that must be addressed and resolved and best done following the Behaviorist practices. Over time, students require fewer and fewer reminders of their expected behavior and tasks when entering the room, demonstrating that learning has occurred for these students. Another aspect of behaviorist learning models is that of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS operates on practices that support chronic misbehaviors by modeling appropriate behavior, modifying instructional practices, and offering students choice along with varying tiers of support and reward systems for students making “good” choices (Ormrod, 2020). I attempt to place some of this into my educational practices by modeling appropriate behavior for my students: politeness to others and asking authentic questions, but realize that PBIS only works as a school wide approach.

I do not support or practice using only the behaviorist theory because it does not solve every problem. Instead, it is a tool best used for modifying or changing students' behavior. To understand how students can learn in the classroom, I look to social cognitive theory. It serves as the basis for why I model the appropriate behaviors in the classroom because social cognitive theorists believe that behaviors are learned from observing how others behave and the resulting actions from those actions or behaviors (Ormrod, 2020). I see this in my classrooms when I observe how one student's behavior can be enough to change the entire classroom learning environment dramatically. Even when they are absent.

Another theory that I use in the classroom is the Cognitive theory (Ormrod, 2020). The cognitive theory states that learning is a mental process not demonstrated by a behavioral change. Instead, information is only memorable when we can connect new information with old information or schemas. Teaching writing, for example, depends on an individual having learned

what individual words represent and how they all relate: words create sentences or phrases, sentences or phrases create paragraphs, and paragraphs begat longer writing. Other aspects of cognitive theory are explained by Piaget, who defined learning as requiring readiness breakpoints in mental development, or how Vygotsky noted that individuals could seek support and scaffolding to expand their readiness to further tasks: Zone of proximal development.

### My Philosophy and the InTASC Standards

My philosophy of education is that students are the front and center of our job. First, We teach not to hear the sound of our voice but to help foster opportunities to learn from others, which means our students are our everything. Second, it means seeing that students are different people every day, every month, every year as they continue to grow and develop. Third, learning happens at different times because not all students are equally ready. Finally, It means finding ways to challenge each and every student equally because our goal is to challenge them, whether that means a lower bar for one student if it is the same challenge that a higher bar means for another student.

Aside from student development, I believe that teaching is only possible by someone who has made the task of acquiring and applying needed knowledge to a subject. For example, I would not turn to a plumber if I needed to learn how to take care of my lawn, nor would I turn to a mechanic for heart surgery. If we would not turn to someone lacking in specific discipline knowledge, is it any surprise that students would fail to listen to us if we were not aware of the specific content concepts for writing, mathematics, or science. However, it is not enough to merely know the content. We, as teachers, are responsible for explaining the knowledge in ways



and methods that engage our students. The old phrase "those who cannot do, teach" is inaccurate. It should be "those who can do—and explain clearly—teach."

I believe that teachers must use elaborate and authentic tasks in their lessons as a means to promote student learning, and to that end teachers must make use of several strategies. First, teachers must have an idea of where students' baseline understanding in relation to the objectives and standards. Accomplishing this task requires that teachers make use of assessment by multiple methods and times: prior, during, and after a lesson. The prior assessment or pre-assessment begins before the lesson has begun. In this assessment, the teacher elicits what students already know, providing a baseline for where or what changes in a lesson need to be made to create links to student knowledge for rich engagement of the materials. During a lesson, teachers continue to rely upon formative assessments from direct observation or engaging activities such as kahoot quizzes or other activities that require the student to practice the skills being taught. Finally, post-assessment confirms what the teacher has observed earlier. The work teachers must put into their practice demonstrates the continued, essential need for learning on the part of the teacher, both in terms of subject knowledge and that of examining and learning from their peers and other professionals: student success.

### Conclusion

Learning is something I have always seen as a natural consequence of receiving information. Something we constantly do. While learning is natural, teaching is anything but natural. Teaching involves careful consideration, thinking beyond instinct, and requires sustained planning and the constant desire to learn. Teaching requires the individual to attempt to perceive all barriers or requirements that need to be surpassed or lowered to enable learning to happen for

each and every student. Only when a teacher has perceived the barriers of others will they be able to inspire students to engage in learning.

One of the essential practices that teachers do when designing lessons is identifying the need for differentiation in their instructions. Students enter our classrooms not in a unity of readiness but rather in a conveyor belt of age. The sameness of treatment means that every classroom will naturally have students who are academically ahead, behind, or at level with their fellow peers, and aside from academics, students will also be of diverse social backgrounds or ethnicity. With the goal of identifying and examining how I incorporate differentiation in my teaching as my guiding question, I began researching how differentiation is being used in classrooms, additionally, to ensure that my teaching meets and supports learning I focuses my second goal for examining best practices that are used in English Language arts classrooms. Finally, I centered my last teaching practice goal on finding a current educational issue taking place in English Language Arts classrooms.

## Chapter II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Purposes and Objectives for the Literature Review**

My purpose in this review of the research was to discover how teachers and researchers have looked at effective teaching and teacher growth in their discipline. I began my research by searching for research on differentiation and diversity because today's classrooms are not a homogenous collection of same level ability. Students are diverse in both ethnicity, academic ability, and exceptionalities or needs, demanding that teachers consider all methods to best support every student's success. I researched studies on best practices for teaching English Language Arts classes because I want to ensure that my pedagogy is supported by research for creating optimal educational experiences for my students. Additionally, because I would be studying my own practice and focusing on these ideas in my endorsement area, I looked for studies that indicated the kinds of instruction that are effective for increasing student reader identity and volume in an English Language Arts classroom as reading is the key foundational skill required for students to be successful in all their classes, but specifically in analysis of texts, production of writing, and crafting of strong oral and written arguments.

This literature review addresses my knowledge of these concepts as a foundation for my understanding to set goals and grow from in my own teaching. I especially looked for research that described effective strategies for each area and gave examples of how it might work in a

classroom. Application of this research was an essential part in building my own knowledge base for this project.

### **Procedures for the Literature Review**

I selected literature for this review based on several specific criteria. Research on Diversity, Differentiation, and Inclusive Education was included if it contained the following descriptors: teaching methods or educational strategies. This search yielded over four thousand relevant articles. In order to narrow my findings and make them more specific to this research project, I then focused my review efforts on articles that discussed teaching English language arts, and instruction. From there, I looked for articles that supported sub-themes that emerged from the major articles in my literature review. These sub-themes which emerged from effective teaching are: 1) designing differentiation, 2) English Language Learners, and 3) inclusive classrooms. The subthemes that emerged with the second major theme Evidence-Based practices for teaching English Language arts are: 1) high leverage practices, 2) strategies of effective instruction in the ELA classroom, and 3) research on student-centered classroom. The subthemes that emerge from studying Building stronger readers in the ELA classroom are: 1) reading identity and reading workshops, 2) creating cooperative reading environments utilizing literature circles, and 3) using technology to advance reading instruction and discussion. For these subsections, I primarily searched the *Eric Database and EBSCO database* for articles that met the keyword criteria listed above, along with a conducting a search for books in the data base of the Hamersly Library at Western Oregon University. After finding these books and articles, I hand-searched their reference lists as sources to find additional related articles and books.

In order to integrate the literature review, I developed a coding protocol and corresponding separation of research into the major themes: 1) differentiation, 2) evidence-based practices, and 3) inclusive classroom in English language arts. I read each article to determine how it fit within these broad thematic categories, and then, through a process of reading and rereading for salient features of each study, I determined the subheadings in the literature review. My intent was to start with a broad treatment of each theme and then to systematically reduce broad understandings of effective teaching in English language arts to specific understanding of how these themes are present in research about effective differentiation in the English language arts classroom occurs in practice instead of theory alone.

### **Effective Teaching in English Language Arts**

This review of research has built a recognition of how to teach English Language Arts in a most effective method and manner, following current best practices. The research will guide the designing of curriculum used to teach middle and secondary students in an inclusive manner, responding to their diverse needs both individually and educationally scaffolded. My purpose in exploring differentiation in the classroom is from personal experiences as a struggling K-12 student, suffering in what was a one-size-fits-all classroom. The original prediction I had regarding this research was that differentiation in instruction is recognized and follows a specific pattern of modification of assignment to assist ESL students and that these modifications assist other students with remedial understanding. Additionally, that these modifications for ESL and SpED students was designed to assist them only in achieving a baseline success level at a standard grade level work while encountering and achieving the demands from the Common Core standards on reading, interpreting, and writing skills.

My desire for learning how to improve my differentiation skills was born from my experiences in my first cooperating teacher's classroom, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade literature arts/social studies classroom with a significant number of students with IEPs or other behavior plans. Out of necessity, I saw that my CT was differentiating her instruction and lesson planning, and not necessarily for these student populations alone. Gifted, remedial, and 'standard' ability students were challenged equally, but with different work. Therefore, I place these as two important needs because I believe they have the most contribution to student success in my future classroom. Success in education is the demonstration of growth and incorporation of learning on the part of the student, so I naturally wanted to explore all aspects of teaching strategies that would help foster the growth of my students. I felt that differentiation in instruction and lesson planning are something of major importance prior to my research. Reading the articles for my research served to emphasize the importance this educational practice has on students' success in our classrooms.

From my research on differentiation, I have learned that it is a practice that was long practiced out of necessity by the single room classrooms of yesteryear and small community schools of today. Differentiation as defined by Tomlinson & Moon (2013) *Assessment and Student Success in a Differentiated Classroom*, encompasses the many practices used by educators in their classroom to determine individual student ability and how we as educators assess and determine what strategies to use in our classrooms. Overwhelmingly, the many articles I researched seemed to focus on primarily literacy study and how the practice of differentiation improves literacy results in elementary aged students. However, the practices revealed there are as applicable to any grade level because of what differentiation practices encompass. The first and main practice of differentiation is that of differing teaching to enable a

diverse heterogeneous-ability classroom. Teachers must consider the diversity of the classroom out of necessity. Over the recent decades, the US classroom has become more diverse, both ethnically and culturally, but also diversity in skill levels and ability: gifted and exceptional students (TAG & SpED).

## **Research Studies**

This research study combined strands of complementary research literature, centered on three sub-themes. First, I discuss the sub-theme 1) differentiation. Second, I consider research on diversity because the US K-12 classrooms are no longer as homogenous as they were before. Inclusion of IEPs, ELLs and other ethnicities are causing the K-12 classroom to be increasingly diverse. Finally, I looked at research on effective teaching practices in English Language arts and Teaching English as a Second Language because (still thinking of how I want to put this).

## **A Review of RESEARCH ON Differentiation**

### **Differentiation design and strategies**

As I began my research on the topic of differentiation, I was unsure of where I wished to begin. Differentiation is a large umbrella for a number of strategies to be used in the classroom. Two of the main authors who are integral to the concept of differentiation of instruction, state that it is often confused or misthought (Tomlinson & Moon, 2013). They go on to relate that differentiation's importance for the classroom is central to a key affecter of a classroom's "learning environment" or the way student and teacher determine whether learning is possible in the classroom (3). Knowing how important differentiation can be on the classroom, I began my research on improving my educational practices by focusing primarily on articles dealing with

differentiation and instruction on classroom learning and instruction. I discovered that one of the common and important practices of differentiation occurring in the classroom deals is that of the literacy classroom. Literacy instruction primarily deals with K-5 education tasks, and centers on teaching these students to become successful readers, a skill that is essential for later schooling, and something many students struggle with will into middle and high school grade levels. Therefore, I chose to study and analyze the common differentiation strategies used in all classrooms, but specifically with literacy or language arts.

The first article that I read dealt with the analysis of whether the practices of differentiation was a foolish endeavor or an example of one of the best practices in an educator's toolbox by examining 20 years' worth of literacy research. While the content of this article concerns differentiation instructional strategies for literacy education in a K-5 grade level, specifically Tier 1 literacy differentiation; these practices, however, are a welcome tool for a teacher in any grade level classroom.

Puzio et al., (2020) argue that differentiation is a valuable skill for educators because "when done well, a teacher differentiating instruction will focus on clear conceptual goals" (460). Differentiating then means the difference between well thought-out pedagogy and curriculum for slapdash plans, leaving students struggling to understand what the teacher wants or imagines them to gain. Of course, Puzio et al., (2020) acknowledge that for many teachers' differentiation instruction is a confusing term of practices because of the sheer number of diverse methods it encompasses and is referred to by both researchers and teachers. Therefore, it is best to limit differentiation to three specific practices: "designed" differentiation, "interactional" differentiation, and "Product" differentiation (Puzio et al., 2020). *Designed* differentiations are the practices of the teacher for differentiating instruction while creating the lessons and all



activities prior to the students entering the room. *Interactional* differentiation are the modifications done during the lesson as they encounter student issues, engagement, and difficulty with understanding task. *Product* Differentiation, Puzio et al., (2020), state is the consideration of what examples students must create to make visible recognition of the concepts they are being taught. Aside from identifying three formats of differentiated instruction, Puzio et al., stress that differentiation is done by teachers almost every day, and that while being far from a major cost of unneeded K-12 expense in training, it is still not a cure all for making all strategies effective (Puzio et al., 2020). Some strategies will always have a greater impact on student learning outcomes.

Watts-Taffe et al., (2012) focused on an analysis of two classrooms offered differentiation instruction by tailoring it from assessment. Again, I chose to analyze this text due to broad reaching impacts of differentiation strategies present in K-5 that can altered to fit higher level class content. The first classroom analyzed in Watts-Taffe et al., (2012) is that of a third-year teacher, Ms. Cooper, covering reading strategy and supported reading comprehension through differentiated instruction. One noted strategy in use in this classroom was designing lessons based on appropriate leveled texts (Puzio et al., 2020), and small groups that the teacher, Ms. Cooper, would use to tailor additional connections needed to match individual students' instructional demands (Watts-Taffe et al., 2012) Further examples of Interactional differentiation (Puzio et al., 2020). The second classroom analyzed in Watts-Taffe et al., (2012) was that of a fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. Manley. Differentiation instruction in her classroom centered on process, determining the best method for students "to get to the final product in a variety of ways" (Watt-Taffe et al., 2012, 311). Differentiation then is the "decisions teachers make" and then must follow a practice of "continuously [evaluating] students' progress and [considering]

their changing interests” (Watts-Taffe et al., 2012, 307). As teachers evaluate their students’ progress then, Watts-Taffe et al., (2012) suggest, teacher should focus on two goals: modification of process, or learning tasks, or modification of product, learning goals. The ultimate goal of these modifications is so that “all students [have] access [to] the same classroom curriculum” tailored by students’ needs (Watts-Taffe et al., 2012; Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, 2003).

The next article I reviewed positions the requirement of differentiation being utilized in all manners including that of assessment because of stating the increasingly diverse nature of classrooms both in the U.S. and in the wider educational settings of other countries (Noman & Kaur, 2014). This article covers assessment differentiation over instructional, but I included it because it covers practicalities to recognize when engaging in differentiated instruction planning. The authors state that in the classroom in general, “every student is expected to achieve the same learning outcomes although their background knowledge is not the same” (Noman & Kaur, 2014). Further, Noman & Kaur, (2014) state it is important for teachers to recognize the impact that assessment plays on their instructional differentiation. They argue that the purpose of assessment in the classroom is “not to mete out failing grades to students but to assess students based upon their needs” (Noman & Kaur, 2014, 171).

Kelly M. Anderson, (2007) identifies and summarizes key elements of differentiation strategies to utilize in the classroom. This article does make use of outmoded thought models, specifically, the concept of learning styles, but overall, I found the information contained to be of relevance to a furthering understanding of differentiation in the classroom and instruction. Anderson, K., (2007) argues that differentiation is inherently born from “[believing] that every child is unique ” and the core beliefs about student differences: “how students learn, learning

preferences, and individual interests” (50). Differentiated instruction also must incorporate student choice, flexibility in both assignment and tasks, and with formative assessment being utilized and gathered each day (Anderson, 2007). When done correctly, Anderson (2007) states, differentiation affords students “opportunities to demonstrate what they know ” while still maintaining a challenging task for each student (51). Aside from the considerations of teachers, Anderson (2007) offers a listing of methods that teachers can utilize to differentiate their instruction. Anderson (2007) starts off by suggesting that differentiation begins with the creation of student data or learning profiles. These profiles are suggested to contain information such as hobbies, learning preferences, family structure; also suggested is the inclusion of student proficiency scores from state assessments or in-class assessments (Anderson, 2007, 51). Finally, Anderson (2007) ends on the ultimate point of differentiation: “students assume responsibility for their learning” (52).

Next, I analyzed Birnie (2015) “Making the Case for Differentiation” in which three misconceptions of differentiated instructions are analyzed and rebutted, demonstrating the value that differentiated instruction places on student learning. The three misconceptions that Birnie (2015) noted dealt with individuals believing that differentiation was a fad, that it requires separate lesson plans for each child, and finally that it was not of good return value for time spent in planning (62). However far from a fad or of little value in terms of effort to return, differentiation is important because it addresses the “increasing demands on teachers to help students attain high standards- whether dictated by the state, district, the school or the community – teachers must embrace approaches that facilitate the attainment of those standards” (Birnie, 2015, 62). While demands are always different, the need for differentiated instruction is something arising from necessity and history. The old one-room schools relied upon

differentiation “before it was called by that name” (Birnie, 2015) because of the sheer age-range of students contained within those school rooms. Today teachers still make use of differentiation when identifying different levels of student understanding of a task or in how tasks are designed to support students in different levels of ability to complete a similar task (i.e., if the goal was to communicate in a foreign language, some would use full statements, other sentence frames, while others yet might rely on pre-crafted conversation examples) (Birnie, 2015). Birnie (2015) positions that an example of tiers of support means that differentiation does not require a separate plan for each student, rather it only requires that each student have only the amount of support needed to accomplish the intended goal. Furthermore, the differentiation needed to be included in the instruction can be minimal compared to expectations as Birnie (2015) noted from their own practice “even in the most heterogeneous class, abilities tend to fall into three to four manageable ranges” (63).

The next article reviewed, George, (2005), is the author’s perspectives on how and why differentiated instruction is a necessity arising from an increasing need for diverse classrooms. One of the recent trends in education is “the rise of charter schools, magnet programs, and voucher systems, growing from attempts to satisfy varied advocacies, further challenging the viability of the traditional public school” (185). Centering the need for sustaining the public education system, George, (2005) states is an increasing reason for demanding the increase in diverse classrooms and schools. Finally, on differentiation, Birnie (2005) states, “differentiating instruction, difficult as it may be, is the [only] choice for a teacher who will not accept a classroom where growing numbers of students are increasingly less successful” (190).

## **Differentiation and English Language Learners**

Analyzing differentiation in regard to English language learners, or Emergent Bilinguals (new term) is something I consider important as I recognize the increasingly diverse language needs of our public school students (Buteau & True, 2009; George, 2005; Wright, 2019; Soltero, 2011). Articles such as Buteau & True, (2009) emphasis the increasing need for utilizing differentiating instruction methods due to cultural and linguistic background of students, and the shift towards utilizing sheltered instruction practices that rely on instruction being carried out in the general education classroom rather than in pull-out situations. Buteau & True, (2009) analyze a classroom for the practices utilized by the teacher that both shelter and differentiate learning tasks for the Emergent Bilingual students. Other examples of differentiation being utilized in this classroom are the use of pictures to elicit understanding in a student native language (L1), physical response, and having students create their own ‘dictionaries’ (Buteau & True, 2009).

Anderson (2007) also discussed how differentiation can be enacted to affect Emergent bilingual students’ ability to accomplish learning and tasks within a diverse classroom. Anderson (2007) offers that EB students “because of [their] limited English proficiency, may work with a group of peers who have less developed skills and needs more direct instruction by a teacher, assistant, or parent volunteer” (50). Anderson (2007) statement of options s valid, but I do have issues with the use of limited English proficiency (subtractive thinking) versus the use of a more positive Emergent Bilingual.

Noman & Kaur (2014) note that “rapid globalization has made our already diverse classrooms even more diverse” (168). Where before teachers had to only consider the needs of different skill levels for a homogenous ethnic classroom, globalization is increasing the ethnic

diversity of our classrooms. While this is mostly found only in major population areas such as major cities (i.e., San Fran, Wash. D.C., New York), that does not mean teachers will never encounter students from different backgrounds or social classes.

### **Differentiation and Inclusive Classrooms**

Research on differentiation towards the creation of inclusive classrooms was something I devoted the least time to for several reasons. First, I did not perceive it as needing more effort to explore as it is broadly supported by the larger methods of differentiated instruction. However, Spencer (2011) argues that a method for creating an inclusive classroom is for educators to recognize the value in using Universal Design for learning (UDL). Spencer states that “typically, when teachers try to make content accessible for struggling learners, they accommodate the work after it has been planned” (10). The main goal of UDL then is that content is proactive, helping teachers by having them focus on the beginning (Spencer, 2011, 11) much in the same manner that Universal design for buildings plans for methods to accommodate disabled persons. Spencer (2011) states the three principles of UDL as making content accessible (differentiation), how to motivate them, and presented in different mediums (i.e., not just print or orally) (11).

### **Principled Practices for Teaching High School English Language Arts**

One of the issues that I have found in my research is that the term “best practices” is personal and contestable (Smagorinsky, 2009; Perrow, 2013); what works for one teacher might not work for another. As a preservice/student teacher I am, in many ways, still searching for information regarding evidence of best or principled practices to utilize in my classroom. What I have discovered is that in English Language Arts, much of the practices involve creating activities or structures that support a diverse student population become successful in the

classroom or the *knowledge gap* (Buehl, 2011; Gottlieb, & Ernst-Slavitt, 2014; Cervetti, & Hiebert, 2018). Activities can involve learning specific vocabulary (Faulkner, 2010) or to engage in becoming active readers (Allred & Cena, 2020). Additionally, the primary practice that is repeated in much of the literature I researched was that of student-centered instruction that offers students choice (Benko, 2012; Graham, & Harris, 2018; Allred, & Cena, 2020; Faulkner, 2010).

### **Research Studies**

This research study combined strands of complementary research literature, centered on three sub-themes. First, I discuss the high leverage practices used in classrooms because they are born from evidence-based practices, utilized because they work. Second, I consider research on strategies and examples of effective instruction because effective instruction encompasses the many different instructional strategies to support diverse learners in a classroom, I also focused my research on effective instruction to the English Language Arts classroom as this is my concentration area. Finally, I looked at research on student-centered classrooms because of increasing standard demands for students to obtain critical thinking skills.

### **Review of Research on High Leverage Practices**

In the first few weeks of my Fall placement my CT uttered these words to me “You need to start using students’ names, and work on memorizing them.” I have always struggled with remembering names, let alone dates and time, but nevertheless I took her at her word and started making an effort at tying names to faces (eyes and masks in the days of Covid2021). While I knew it was an important goal for making students feel welcome, it was not until I began researching high level practices that I realized that the simple act was part of a crucial practice of

creating a welcoming classroom for students (TeachingWorks, 2021). I continue to hone my practices to follow these practices:

- Leading a group discussion:
- Explaining and modeling content, practices, and strategies
- Eliciting and interpreting student thinking
- Diagnosing particular common patterns of student thinking and development in subject-matter domain
- Implementing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work
- Coordinating and adjusting instruction during a lesson
- Specifying and reinforcing productive student behavior
- Implementing organizational routines
- Setting up and managing small group work
- Building respectful relationships with students
- Talking about a student with parents or other caregivers
- Learning about students' cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction
- Setting long- and short-term learning goals for students
- Designing single lessons and sequences of lessons
- Checking student understanding during and at the conclusion of lessons
- Selecting and designing formal assessments of student learning
- Interpreting the results of student work, including routine assignments, quizzes, tests, projects, and standardized assessments
- Providing oral and written feedback to students



- Analyzing instruction for the purpose of improving it

TeachingWorks (2021).

My first CT, Laura, practiced many of these HLPs each at different times, but it was clear that her usage of HLPs was well established in her teaching style and practices. The first practice that I observed of her HLPs was that of building a respectful relationship with the students. Laura emphasized that teachers had to make a committed effort to always remember their students' names, and reminded me to improve my practice of this HLP in my second month of teaching as I struggled to remember all the students' names. Second, she emphasized the need to evaluate instruction by analyzing how students reacted and other formative assessments. I saw evidence of her practice of this HLP in multiple instances, but the clearest was near the end of my placement, when she had introduced a unit on suicide prevention and had the students practice journaling, but because students demonstrated low engagement, she determined that she would modify that particular activity in the future. Third, while I was a part of her classroom, my CT would have me write down a two-column journal after each lesson, recording what I thought went well, and what I thought could be improved upon and offered suggestions on how to improve my feedback toward students. Laura practiced many of the other HLPs, but I am going to instead focus on comparing my developing practices of HLPs by comparing them with Laura's.

Comparing my HLP practices with Laura's, it is immediately apparent that I still struggle with utilizing all 19 of the HLP strategies in my current teaching practices, but they exist as objects to review and hone. With the reminders from both my CT and the TeachingWorks High Leverage practices article, I have begun to attain a working practice of a few HLPs, but I continue to work on developing them such as that of coordinating and adjusting instruction. In

regard to the HLP of coordinating and adjusting instruction, I have had to adapt my lessons during my first 3-5 lesson plan, but it took time to develop my practice and is still something to constantly improve upon. After the direction from Laura, I made a consistent effort to use students' names, which helped with both remembering them, and also helped build connections with the students. That is not to say that I remembered every student, I struggled constantly with names, sometimes using another student's name for their peer, or forgetting who a student is thanks to the presence of the masks we are required to wear because of Covid19 safety protocols adopted in the school at the time. Another improvement in my HLP utilization is that of gauging student understanding during and after lessons. It took many reminders, and overcoming old, bad habits, but I have implemented a check-in strategy with students during the lesson in which after I have released students to the task, I use questions or observations to monitor each individual student's understanding. However, I am still developing how to utilize this information in regard to adjusting my units of instruction.

High leverage practices are useful for all students, not just the general education classroom. In their research McCray et al., (2017) cite McCleskey & Brownell, (2015) when explaining that HLPs for SpED and for general classroom teachers vary only in intensity. Furthermore, the list of HLPs they cite deal with instructional strategies dealing with “[teaching] cognitive and metacognitive strategies, [scaffolding], instructional technology, active student engagement, flexible grouping, positive feedback, explicit instruction, [adapting] curriculum tasks (McCray et al., 2017, 5). Because of their universal usage, I am not devoting more research into HLPs for specific usage with ELLs or SpED students.

## **Review of Research on Teaching Strategies and Effective Instruction**

My observations and experience from my first student teaching placement has made me curious about what are current teaching strategies being used in K-12 classrooms. I focused my research on English Language Art classrooms because I wished to ensure that my instruction would be effective and centered on evidence in my discipline area. The ELA classroom has many demands required by the Common Core State Standards. According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative (2021), teachers are required to build a foundation for college and career readiness by providing lessons that “build students reading skills containing both fiction, informational, and other styles of text (i.e., poems, plays, myths); provide lessons on student learning to write ‘as a way of offering and supporting opinions, [demonstrate] understanding of the subjects they are studying, and [convey] real and imagined experiences and events.’ Further they must provide students with ‘ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations’ – small or whole class; and, finally, teachers must provide lessons that hone students’ abilities to master English grammar conventions and the ability to convey meaning effectively.” In order for educators to meet these demands they must utilize effective instruction relying on teaching strategies supported by evidence.

My research into effective instruction and teaching practices began with my analysis of the core skill of reading. I believe that reading is the key skill that supports and increases student performance in all other aspects of the Common Core. Reading increases our vocabulary which directly relates to the breadth of content. Additionally, reading supports our writing by exposing us to different forms of writing. With the increasing requirement that all K-12 students attain a college ready level of reading, it became obvious that there would be strategies for effective

teaching which center on improving this area (Allred & Cena, 2020; Cervetti, & Hiebert, 2018; Buehl, 2011; Faulkner, 2010; Gallagher & Kittle, 2018).

It is essential to recognize that all instruction for increasing student reading is only obtainable if the student will actually open a book in the first place. Therefore, the question becomes not how to improve students' reading, but how to get them interested in reading or increase their motivation to read. Allred & Cena (2020) investigate how student choice can affect reading motivation and how silent reading time influences their perceptions of reading. Their investigation was framed by the lens of Transactional Theory in which they describe “reading teachers’ tasks as creating fertile classroom environments where fruitful students’ transactions with texts can occur” (Allred & Cena, 2020, p. 27, cf. Rosenblatt, 1995). The following are the specific teaching strategies and practices suggested as key practices: student choice, sustained silent reading, and literature circles (Allred & Cena, 2020; Gallagher, K., & Kittle, P., 2018) and targeted vocabulary instruction that focuses on quality instead of quantity (Faulkner, 2010; Bromley, 2007).

Student choice as a practice is essential because it “can help students develop a love for reading while interacting with challenging texts” (Allred & Cena, 2020, p. 28). Furthermore, when teachers ignore student choice, they inevitably spend less time thinking on empowering the students as they spend on designing lessons or “filling vs spending” time (Gallagher & Kittle, 2018). Filling time, Gallagher & Kittle (2018) state, is the emphasis on assignments rather than asking the harder questions of whether the students will become “empowered as readers, writers, listeners, and speakers” (4). . Using questionnaires and other survey options, research has demonstrated that students respond positively with increased engagement and motivation (Allred & Cena, 2020). The arguments here have implications for enacting student self-selected text for

reading times as the authors suggest creating a classroom library in which teachers provide texts of sufficient complexity while allowing the students to make their choice in what to read. However, while the increase in student self-selected texts should be enacted, there still exist reasons for having whole class texts as well. I saw this practice demonstrated in my CT's classroom. Laura had students read their self-selected texts for the final 10 mins of class. Students in her classroom had multiple ways of selecting a text: they could choose to read books on their mobile phones from eReading programs, the school library, and the library offered in Laura's classroom. While student engagement was not 100%, over-time students seemed to warm to the practice. The last practice suggested by Allred & Cena (2020), literature circles, was a practice that I only saw during the whole class readings. Not surprising as Allred & Cena (2020) note that literature circles as an instructional model is less favored compared to the teacher leading discussion.

Other research in reading instruction as practice is emphasized by Buehl (2011). Buehl (2011) positions we can all call ourselves readers, but what influences motivation to reading is how we identify ourselves in relation to texts. If a student identifies themselves as being scientifically bent, Buehl (2011) argues, then he will find or have prior insights into engaging with scientific texts. Similarly for math and literature identities affecting student motivation and insight to their texts. Therefore, the ultimate goal for teachers Buehl (2011) states is that of helping our students create identities as being readers in our classroom disciplines. Aside from constructing these identities, Buehl (2011) emphasizes that teachers should instruct students in moving from beyond surface level reading to effective reading: generating questions, identifying discipline terms, and making inferences. Of course, ensuring that our students are able to engage in these practices requires laying solid foundational skills (Buehl, 2011; Cervetti & Hiebert,

2018). As Buehl (2011) notes, “if students lack prior academic knowledge, then they are less likely to build that knowledge through reading assignments” (p. 120). My CT seemed to practice this without effort, but I realize that this is probably the hardest yet most necessary teaching strategy for any discipline: planning the implementation of tasks to build the skills of students. In my CT’s classroom that was done by first pre-assessments to determine what student knowledge levels were and then targeted tasks to support current academic knowledge while developing others.

Other practices by my CT aimed at student reading development are that of vocabulary building. Vocabulary building is important because it “is a key aspect of developing engaged and successful readers” (Bromley, 2007, p. 528). My CT would have specific days each week in which students would learn a new vocab word, and be provided with example sentences and required to create their own sentences as well. Faulkner (2010) supports this method of vocab instruction in which students learn words in quality instead of quantity. Faulkner (2010) argues that a limited vocabulary learning load helps engage students in deeper understanding as the effort is perceived as lower to requirements. After engaging in this practice, Faulkner (2010) reported that this resulted in students beginning to use the new vocabulary terms in their writing, demonstrating evidence of learning.

Aside from seeing results of student incorporation of reading information, writing is a crucial aspect in the English classroom because writing is a social and communicative practice (Graham & Harris, 2018). Writing is so important because it transcends time and space; we still read novels by long dead authors. Writing is where students demonstrate the effects of reading on their vocabulary, knowledge, and metacognitive skills. Writing as a practice of instruction has changed over the years. When I was in my K-12 years, writing was still very much being taught

as a product, and while there are still remnants of it today (i.e., 5 paragraph), writing as process has become more recognized thanks to the voices of Don Murray, Peter Elbow, and others. Researching some of the common practices of ELA teachers for instruction on writing yielded quite a few techniques that I will emphasize in my ongoing practice.

The first effective practice utilized in writing instruction is that of scaffolding – the same as any instruction – however in writing most teachers scaffold by providing the structure of the 5 paragraph essay as when introduced as a steppingstone rather than a defining style of writing it helps provide necessary structure for students to develop (Benko, 2012). Further support comes from modeling, either in an example from prior students work or from the teacher working with students in real time (Benko, 2012). Other writing practices are those of daily writing or journaling as suggested by Gallagher & Kittle (2018) or in the utilization of mentor texts. I saw a lot of examples of these practices in my CTs classroom from the daily writing journal at the beginning of class to exercises designed to have students practice and have support where needed in their writing (i.e., support for complete sentences, paragraphs, and essays).

### **Building Stronger Readers to become Successful Students in Teaching High-School ELA**

From my research into best practices for the ELA classroom the most prevalent theme was that of engaging students in practices in which they develop their reading skills. Prior to my researching, I believed this was going to be the main goal of teachers because more than any other field, English language arts has the most specific goals of increasing students' reading and interpretation skills, both oral and written. While science and math courses require students to engage in reading specific styles, Language arts is devoted to engaging students as readers and interpreters of the human experience as contained in novels, poems, essays, and other texts

(Common Core, 2021). Therefore, it is important for teachers to find authentic ways in which we can engage students in becoming both readers and interpreters of literature (Cone, 1994; Buehl, 2011; Hebb & Axiotis, 2000; Falkner, 2011; Lausé, 2004; Katsuta & Sawada, 2021).

Additionally, we have to remember that classrooms have become increasingly more diverse in the last several decades, demanding that we include reading instruction opportunities for students with authentic practices and by utilizing methods that enable student success for EB/ELL, Non-White and Non-ELL, and SpED backgrounds (Blake, 1998; Daniels, 2002; Daniels, 2005; O'Brien, 2007). Additionally, the inclusion of technology means that teachers can use technological improvements to engage students in authentic reading discussions both in and outside of class (Jewell, 2005; Gunter, 2012). Using the research, I have gathered, I hope to develop a synthesized set of practices to implement in my language arts classrooms with the knowledge of how and when to enact these practices to best create opportunities for my students to become successful in their reading and writing skills.

### **Research Studies**

This research study combined strands of complementary research literature, centered on the subthemes. First, I discuss the creation of student identities as readers and how reading workshops can assist in creating reader identities because it is important to remember that our reading identity directly relates to student success both in the classroom and life after K-12. Second, I consider research on cooperative reading environments using literature circles because of how these strategies create authentic reading environments that engages students of diverse backgrounds in attaining reading goals, and naturally require students to engage in other aspects of the standards centering on speaking and listening. Third, and finally, I look at research on



using technology for reading instruction because both technology and student population shifts demand that effective teachers seek ways to stay relevant with engaging students in reading assignments in the changing landscape.

### **Student Reading Identity and development through Reading Workshops**

What is a reading identity? It is a simple question with a complex answer, chief of which is that reading identity can affect how students engage in the requirements of the Common Core. Because students are required to have mastered key concepts for reading, writing, and speaking and listening by the time they graduate high school. They must demonstrate ability to analyze texts both fiction and informational, craft arguments and narratives, through a range of contexts and time; and, lastly, be able to communicate clearly (Common Core, 2021). Therefore, the greatest task of the ELA teacher is in the creation of a reading identity in which the student enjoys reading rather than seeing it as a chore or something to be performed rather than enjoyed (Cone, 1994) which enables them to master they key concepts of the standards.

To create an understanding of student reader identity, researchers first asked students the question of whether they were a reader, expecting a yes or no, student replies typically came in three varieties reader, non-reader, and an in-between or transitioning reader (Cone, 1994). Readers, Cone (1994) noted, were typically students who found reading as pleasurable, referencing constant reading outside of school hours; non-readers were students who viewed reading as a laborious task, done only when required and avoided otherwise. Non-readers were also more likely to describe a reader as someone who “read fast, read long books, understand what they read, readers don’t quit books” (Cone, 1994, p 456). An erroneous belief as many readers can attest. However, between the two extremes – reader and non-reader – Cone (1994) noticed students who were in the transition between non-reader to reader. She typified these

students as non-readers who had come across something that inspired them to read, citing one of her students “one book from an author is all it takes” (Cone, 1994).

Later on, reading identity was seen as being created based on interpretations of new content filtered through the context of prior knowledge (Buehl, 2011), and it is a crucial concept to build within students as “reading and writing are mutually reinforcing processes” (Hebb, 2000, p. 22). The notion of reading identity continued developing as both college and high school teachers grappled with finding practical methods and applications into ways of motivating students into becoming engaged readers rather than reluctant readers (Hebb, 2000; Axiotis, 2000). Hebb (2000) believes that reluctant reader issues are something centered in self-esteem or confidence and that teachers need to try and understand the student’s perspective to rebut. Meanwhile, Axiotis (2000) noticed that she tried to structure texts in such a way that students were already knowledgeable of subject material, or in other words, Axiotis (2000) believes that identity of readers is in relation to their prior knowledge and otherwise how they see themselves. Rather than rely on a simple yes/no question pattern of asking the student are they readers or not, Buehl (2011) states that our reading identity is a creation of responses to five simple questions: what do you read, where and when do you read, how do you read, and lastly why do you read. Therefore, as we provide these questions to students, a more complex identity of the student is formed. We see what types of texts they commonly read, and we also learn more of their motivation.

Aside from knowing what types of texts students enjoy reading, Reading identity is also influenced by the texts we examine in classes and our cultural backgrounds. Many students of color have issues with reading because of the texts being selected to read in class as ““everything I read is about White people and boy,”” and that students would therefore have little reason or

desire to see themselves as readers because “this literature [does] not, and [can] not, ‘talk’ to them” (Blake, 1998, p. 238). Recognizing this disconnect between reader and text is a crucial ingredient in our formation of readers in our classrooms. It is no longer a time in which classrooms are continually being dominated by White students, our schools are becoming increasingly diverse which requires us as teachers to find ways for the “traditional response procedures...to be carefully scrutinized, questioned, and challenged” (238). After all, as Cone (1994) states, “students become non-learners as a result of teachers’ and their own low expectations” (455); therefore, if we fail to consider texts or methods of instruction that invite students into reading then we demonstrate a low expectation of all students’ success.

### **Reading Workshops**

One instructional method that can develop readers’ identities and the creation of readers is that of a reading workshop which has direct implication in the creation of long-term student reading identities by marrying the practice of study “of classic literature with free-choice reading that builds their reading skills” (Lausé, 2004, p. 24). Practitioners of reading workshops reference the work of Atwell (1998; 2015) as the founder of reading workshops (Lausé, 2004; Katsuta, & Sawada, 2021). Overall, reading workshops have profound impacts on students reading identities, and improves upon older practices that center on teacher creation that “[facilitate] student-led discussions...but they never [become] better readers,” noting that rather than guiding students “through the ideas in literature, I was helping them translate the book” (Lausé, 2004, p. 24). Reading workshops are not without structure, however. Lausé (2004) begins by assigning students each the same book, and has the students read for a set time frame (45 mins) so that student reading pace can be establish. Grading is then based on whether students have met or exceeded their page goals of six nights times the pages read in 45 mins.

Armed with these strategies, Lausé (2004) identifies a positive student reading identity shift noting that “I have never had a student read fewer than fifteen extra books in my class” (p. 26). Lausé (2004) positions that what made this possible was allowing students the ability to select their own texts rather than having the teacher decide for them. After all, she notes, “as adult readers we allow ourselves to be choosy. Students, too, need permission to discriminate between what they don’t like and what they do” (Lausé, 2004, p. 26).

While Lausé (2004) highlights the advantages for a reading workshop, not all schools or countries allow for free adoption of its practice. For example, Japan, and other Southeast Asian countries, require a strict course of mandated texts that students must read and respond. Katsuta & Sawada, (2021) study also identified positive impacts of reading workshops on student reading identity, but also high-light organization and academic requirements that can otherwise halt full academical adoption. While Katsuta & Sawada (2021) do note that full-adoption is not possible, currently, their practice of a reading workshop did result in students increasing their reading volume. Remarkably, they also noted that students found that there were advantages for the proscribed text selection rather than the freedom of the workshop (Katsuta & Sawada), which can be used to interpret reading issues with non-native English readers in terms of their buy-in with a reading workshop program.

### **Review of Research on Literature Circles and Student Diversity**

Reading is for many of us a pleasurable activity that we engage in our free time. The types of texts we might read depends on our reading identities: for teachers we might spend our time switching between pleasure and curricular or pedagogical texts (Buehl, 2011), but in all if we identify ourselves as readers, we spend the bulk of our reading time finding ways to enjoy reading. Of course, reading doesn’t have to be a solitary action. Reading clubs or groups in

which a group of individuals, all reading the same book, come together and share their reading observations, teasing out new information and viewpoints. So why wouldn't this work for our students, Harvey Daniels positions in his book, *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-centered Classroom*, (1994).

Literature circles require that students work or collaborate together, which has pedagogical power because individual onus is lessened, "people can do jobs together that they can't do nearly so well alone" (Daniels, H., 2002, p. 10). Furthermore, while "the whole literature circle phenomenon has been pretty much driven by fiction" the use of this strategy isn't limited to just only reading a fiction novel, it can also be used to support students reading information texts (Daniels, 2002). Student requirements to read informational texts is important for both school and life-long goals. Daniels (2002) notes that "standardized reading tests contain 70-80% expository text" (p. 7). That is not to say that non-fiction literature circles are free-forming or without requirements. Non-fiction circle text criteria:

1. Content that is important or engaging
2. People we can care about
3. A narrative structure or chronological line
4. Places we can visualize
5. Danger, conflicts, risks, or choices
6. Value, moral, ethical, or political dimensions
7. Some ideas that reasonable people can debate, dispute, or disagree about.

Daniels, (2002), p. 11

Finally, Daniels (2002) notes that regardless of the text type, students will still be required to utilize the "same discussion skills as regular fiction circles" (p. 13). In other words, they need to

practice keeping logs, marking texts, and participating in groups with reflections and discussion that build toward developing collaboration skills (Daniels, 2002). Collaboration can be a crucial ingredient for developing student reading identities because as Jewell (2005) notes, “reading the same text with a group is downright entertaining” (p. 86).

Aside from both the increase in student collaboration and enjoyment, literature circles are the perfect tool in the language art teacher’s toolkit if not “a very important part of the *solution*” for addressing the need for differentiation in their classrooms due to students’ educational needs (Daniels, H. 2005, p. 54). One of the most challenging aspects of being a teacher today is acknowledging and accommodating the reality of general education placements for students on IEPs, 504s, or being EBs because these placements benefit students with “learning and behavior problems benefit from the opportunity to engage in meaningful interaction with their peers” (O’Brien, 2007, p 8). What makes the literature circle a fundamental tool for engaging students with special needs is that when designed well, they “begin with students choosing a book they want to read (and that they *can* read, fluently and enjoyably)” (Daniels, 2005, p. 55). Another issue for students of special needs is that over time student self-efficacy may decrease due to issues of being different, unsuccessful, or shy; however, the literature circles offer these students “a chance to step back in, speak up and be heard” (Daniels, 2005, p. 55).

### **Technology for Reading and Response**

As the years have gone by our society is rapidly developing into a digital based community. People can shop from home with the easy click of a button from their favorite stores or marketplaces. However, this technology is not just for profit, much has been developed in the last thirty years to support student and adult learning, especially in the case of reading (Castellani & Jeffs, 2001; Jewell, 2005; Gunter, 2012; Wertz & Saine, 2014) or in the analysis of technology

being integrated into the classroom (Securro, Mayo, & Rinehart, 2009). Today the advantages of space between e-books and physical books on reading opportunities are quite clear. E-books and e-readers have dramatically changed the reading landscape, as a library of books can now fit in a purse or backpack, weighing less than pound, and yet containing almost as many books as the school library. And as technology changes the way we read, from print to digital screen, I believe as teachers that we should be changing the way we teach reading. We should be embracing the reading technological breakthroughs of the last decade: students should be encouraged to use these e-books and the eReader software or devices to gain access to a world of books outside of the simple confines of the classroom or school. I don't expect this to be a rapid adoption, and through my research on reading technology in the classroom, I have found a trend of gaps between creation of technology and its adoption by educators.

Early adoption of technology centered on embracing tools for supporting students who “exhibit problems with reading fluency, text comprehension skills, vocabulary learning and abstract reasoning” (Castellani & Jeffs, 2001, pg. 60, cf. Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1993). In Castellani & Jeffs (2001) the authors explore and explain the practices applications of technology for the general education classroom with specific attention placed on enabling students with disabilities equal access to the general education classroom. For example, text to speech software, word predictions, or different input devices through the usage of technology enabled students who had physical or environment challenges to engage in general education classrooms. Aside from whether a student was perceived as having a disability, adoption of technology seems to center on whether the teacher/school was “optimistic or guarded” on whether these technological tools would facilitate or enhance student learning (Securro, Mayo, & Rinehart, 2009). Interviewing teachers, Securro, Mayo, & Rinehart (2009) report a trending

belief in that the teachers “believe that they can teach effectively without computers but think language instruction is better off with it particularly for lower achieving students and most definitely for special [education students] who need the drill and practice” (76). Teacher to technology relationship need not be antagonistic.

One method of engaging students and educators into a non-antagonistic relationship could be through the usage of enabling out-of-classroom dialogues. These dialogues allowing the creation of “environments where ideas can be exchanged and then change, where hypotheses are presented, confronted, questioned, and confirmed” (Jewell, 2005, pg. 83). In other word students need opportunities to engage fully as a community without fear of failure or embarrassment and the best method for students to participate in this kind of learning is facilitated through the use of discussion boards by the classroom teacher. Jewell (2005) states that discussion boards allow students to craft answers that are “more eloquent and better supported than answers given orally in class” (p. 83). While teachers can be forgiven for not enacting discussion boards, the reality is that all too often, the majority of students in a given classroom remain silent, afraid to be called upon, or provide input into class discussions (Jewell, 2005). Student fear aside, the classroom time is limited, most often running only fifty minutes, meaning that discussion time itself is a carved, truncated opportunity. However, Jewell (2005) reported that her online discussion boards enabled all students (ELL/EB, or SpED) to gain opportunities to engage in a critical ELA disciplinary skill: shared interpretation of texts. Of further importance is that by utilizing the discussion boards, teachers can flip the tasks of reading and response: “students can read in class and discuss the text at home” (Jewell, 2005, p. 84).

While the advantage of technology for the ELA classroom is clear in the use of discussion boards, another practice that can accelerate student learning is that of changing the



dynamic of instruction and student response (Gunter, 2012). Motivation is a primary key element of student success, but Gunter (2012) suggests “our educational system has failed to properly utilize and address this concept in designing a culture of change and learning” (p. 136). Further, the failure is because of the lack in real world, authentic learning tasks (Gunter, 2012). A real world, authentic task that teachers can utilize is based on research showing “that today’s generation of students loves a good story, but seems to lack a fundamental understanding of how good stories are invented/created” (Gunter, 2012, p. 137). Setting out a series of interventions involving students being shown and narrative constructs found in film, and role-playing games and then were tasked with using group work involving “story-telling circles,” role play and other methods to reduce or support students’ abilities in regard to vocabulary, syntax, and grammar (Gunter, 2012). Ultimately, the students were task with creating “short, personal narratives (meStories) that were captured on video” (Gunter, 2012, p. 141). These videos were required to follow a recipe of process that involved “(1) Time & Place, (2) Cause & Effect, (3) Central Character, and (4) Communicate their story/conflict (Gunter, 2012, p. 142). Through her research, Gunter (2012) found that students associated an increase in attitude toward reading, noting that “more than 45% of the students expressed newly found enjoyment for reading and/or no longer thought reading was a waste of time (p. 149). Aside from engaging students in technology-driven tasks—video talks or translation of plot to video—classroom technology can support students in the more complex tasks from the Common Core standards, specifically close reading of texts (Wertz, & Saine, 2014). Using technology with students reading complex texts, teachers are able to complement the texts with appropriate scaffolding to enable student success (Wertz & Saine, 2014). Digital or online texts such as e-books or newspapers enable students to have access to texts outside of the classroom and with a range of support, and digital organizers

such as those on *ReadWriteThink* enable creation and submission easy and simple as an email to their teacher (Wertz & Saine, 2014).

## **Summary**

The literature I have reviewed in this chapter connects my three themes to the central focus of effective teaching in the English Language Arts classroom. The three themes I developed over the course of my research are: (1), culturally responsive pedagogy, evidence based practices utilized by English Language Arts teachers, and (3), developing students into readers in the English Language arts classroom. As a teacher in an increasingly changing learning landscape both in student diversity and learning needs, and the increasing demand for use of technology, I believe it was imperative to understand the research behind effective practices used by teachers today to best support my students and my practices as a teacher. My goal as a teacher is to help students feel welcome in the classroom and curriculum, feel supported in their learning, and become transformed by developing a love of reading and learning in themselves. To achieve these goals, I plan to incorporate the practices that I researched in this chapter in my future practices.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODS

The methods of inquiry for this study focused on the principles and practices of action research, using self-study aligned with professional teacher standards, teacher artifacts: including lesson plan reflections and teacher journals, and scanning of student work as a means of data collection. I will begin with a review of action research principles to establish the foundation for this study's method of inquiry. Second, I will review the choices and purposes of data collection that helped to highlight my instruction and means for searching for improvement. Third, I will detail my context for the study, methods of data collection protocols, maintaining credibility and trustworthiness of the data, and acknowledge my limitations as a researcher. Finally, I will present the procedures used for studying my practice, while providing data and analysis that speaks to adaptations and adjustments made to my instruction as I implanted this study.

#### **Research Questions**

My focus for this research was centered on identifying first some of the specific best practices used in education by effective teachers, narrowing it down to the usage of differentiation both in instruction and in lesson plans, acknowledging and adapting instruction for students of diverse backgrounds both ethnic and class, and finally ending with an examination of a key concept of literacy, and creating and fostering successful readers in the English language arts classroom. This focus aligned with the following INTASC Standards for teacher professional development, specifically, how do I differentiate my assessment of

individuals and determine what will be appropriate modifications to support their learning.

Secondly, continuing, how do I then determine what are appropriate modifications necessary to enable whole class success in a frequently diverse classroom. Additionally, I considered how studying my own practice in line with INTASC Standards could improve my own instruction and therefore, student learning. The purpose of this study was to research and determine what are a range of practices that I can make use of to support student learning in my classroom. The research question (s) for this study were:

1. How do teachers use differentiation in their classrooms? What I had hoped to learn in my research was a series of strategies or specific actions that I could enact within my classroom to enable student success. Data gathered from a focus on this question was used to test whether the strategies I currently use are sufficient or need to be modified and evidence of my practicing these specific strategies.
2. How do effective teachers manage their classrooms and enable student success? My research question here attempts to answer some definitive practices to make use of in the classroom. Data gathered from this question was used to describe evidence of my using these principles in my practice.
3. Finally, my last question was what are some specific strategies being used in the classroom to support students' learning, focusing in specific on how to develop students' ability to both read and produce quality and quantity of texts. I had hoped to learn specific practices to engage my future students. Data gathered from a focus on this question was used to describe my evidence of using the found principles in my instruction.

## **INTASC Standards**

The INTASC Standards are the collection of standards that demonstrates what effective teaching should resemble, specifically, it focuses on identifying the key core standards that all teachers should know and make use within their classrooms as they center on enabling K-12 students to be successful and upon their graduation be ready to enter either the workforce or college. What is important about the INTASC standards is that they are uniform and more importantly widely adopted. For my action research project, I have chosen to focus on the following specific INTASC standards: learner development, learning differences and environments, and providing content knowledge and application of content.

## **Methods and Procedures**

Because my purpose was to describe my own teaching practice as well as how I use data to improve my own practice in line with the INTASC professional standards, it was important to choose a method that could account for both what the standards are for teachers and how I was paying attention to my own practice through data collection to improve it. Accordingly, this study was designed as an action research study. Action research is the study of a particular or particulars in a teacher's classroom or practice. Therefore, the data that is being accumulated in any such research project is specific and limited. It is specific in that it centers only on the teacher's classroom or school; limited by means of both the specificness, but also there is no need to acquire decades of data. In terms of pre-service teachers such as myself, action research enables us to examine our practices inside our learning classrooms. We are able to record data

from students and connect and reflect with our cooperating teachers that allow us to build a larger understanding of our teaching practices and their effectiveness.

### **Data Collection**

The basic steps in action research are 1) identify a topic or issue to study, 2) collect data related to the chosen topic or issue, 3) analyze and interpret the collected data, and 4) carry out action planning, which represents the application of the action research results. Data collection in an action research project typically is related to the topic or issues, and provide answers pertinent to the research questions. As Padak and Padak observe, “Any information that can help you answer your questions is data” (1994). Therefore, I used a variety of data collection tools related to my topic to ensure the validity of my results. Furthermore, I adhered to the following four characteristics in determining the data I would collect for my study, 1) anonymity of students, 2) comparison in data collection was built in so that the results could be judged against themselves both before and after the intervention period, 3) aspects of performance to be examined were identified prior to data collection so that the information was relevant and connected to the research questions, and 4) a variety of data was collected so that different aspects of the topic could be brought to light (Padak and Padak, 1994). Finally, because I was studying my own practice while I was in the middle of said practice, I acknowledge the “spiraling nature” of data collection in action research (Padak and Padak, 1994). By focusing on data in connection to my research questions, my attention tuned to other pieces of data that emerged in relation to my questions. These emergent data pieces were included as part of the study as they had relevance to my research questions.

Because my research questions focus on how do teachers use differentiation in their classrooms in their instruction and classroom feedback, How do effective teachers manage their classrooms and enable student success, what are some specific strategies being used in the classroom to support students learning, focusing in specific on how to develop students' ability to both read and produce quality and quantity of texts, I chose to collect data that would provide information about how my practice and the interventions I identified aligned with the research topic. The types of data I chose to collect are described next.

### **First Type of Data Collected**

The data collected here is from my reflection notes and recordings of my teaching practices through the use of a robotic platform and my smartphone. I have included reflections both in my lesson plans and in a journal in which I jot down what aspects of my lesson went well, and what aspects require tweaking or what I might seek to improve upon.

### **Second Type of Data Collected**

I am using data from observations of my lessons, and including videos of lesson in which I analyze for examples in which I am demonstrating usage of key practices and techniques of high-leverage practices.

### **Third Type of Data Collected**

My last type of data collected is going to be student work. I will use this data as validation of success in how my adaptation of feedback and high-leverage practices has translated into student understanding and success. I will collect student work from vocabulary quizzes, presentations.

### **Context of the Study**

My action research project study is taking place in a small high school located in a rural area near the urban areas of Eugene/Springfield. I am working with freshman students in English Language arts in a department with one teacher for each grade ranges (9-12). The school makes use of weekly professional learning community meetings on every Wednesday. These meetings are usually intra-department but later switch to inter-department.

The school has a population of 357 students, 3% of whom are identified as American Indian/Alaska Native, 12% are identified as Hispanic/Latino, with 78% as White with 100% of teachers identified as White. 18% of students are in the system as students with disabilities, with over 95% of students at the school qualifying for free/reduced price lunches. In addition to the population demographics, the school has an on-time graduation success rate of 85% compared to the 83% rate for the Oregon average, and an additional 10% will complete their diploma or receive a GED a year after leaving. Lastly, students demonstrate only 34% of them are on-track to graduate with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of graduation credits in their freshman year, and 57% within one year of graduation enroll in a two or four year college or university.



In my classroom, I am currently teaching on a traditional schedule; however, class length is greater at 90 minutes in length. My student demographics largely mirror the school's district report card: predominately white, with a few students of color. Additionally, I have three students who are registered with an IEP and one student is registered as having a 504 plan.

### **Participants**

Because this study was designed using an action research approach, the main participant in the study is myself, as the teacher. As my learning progressed throughout my student teaching program, I became interested in a number of ideas that would help me to improve my instruction. Ultimately, I decided to focus on the main research areas outlined in my research question. To lend credibility to the results I will share from my self-study of my practice, it is important to describe my role in the classroom where I teach. In this section I will focus on describing my own classroom and my role as the teacher. I joined Deborah's classroom about the early part of February or Winter term, so about two months with the students, getting to know them. As I was engaged in a student teaching placement prior to this placement, I have not worked with my cooperating teacher, Deborah, in designing my study. Instead, my study was designed as part of my teaching program. From my opportunities to handle instruction, I have further refined my initial goals of my research to the targeted practices of learning and demonstrating how to make and utilize or engage in differentiation of instruction, and through reflection with my Deborah to identify strengths and weaknesses for my utilization of high-leverage practices.

### **How I Studied My Teaching**

How I will answer my research questions is through keeping an ongoing journal, noting down what I thought went well in a lesson, what I believe was the principal reason behind it, and then conferencing with my cooperating teacher to receive feedback. I am studying my practices beginning from the start of my teaching practicums, so roughly one entire school year or 180ish days. My study is centered in both my reflections on my lesson plans, noting how I have adapted to specific student needs, but also to recognize whether I have included the earlier differentiations within my current lesson plans. Additionally, I am looking for my engagement in creating good classroom learning environments and part of that will be demonstrated in notes from discussion with my cooperating teacher, but also through reviews of my lessons from recordings using the robotic camera SWIVL.

## Chapter IV

### Data Analysis

#### Research Questions

To find answers for my research questions that I proposed in chapter 3 of this paper, I will analyze the data I gathered to answer these research questions: *What are the practices of effective teachers, and how can I emulate their practices in my own teaching? What evidence-based practices will best help my students learn?* and finally, *How can I support students into becoming stronger readers?* I have gathered data from my own practices over this year as a student teacher, consisting of my lesson plans, teaching journal, and feedback and observation data from both my cooperating teachers and my student-teaching supervisor. As I analyzed my data, I began to ask myself the following question to help separate the data: (1) how did I practice designing differentiation in my instructions and lesson plans, (2) what were the specific examples of high-leverage practices being demonstrated in my lesson plans and observed by my cooperating teachers and supervisor, (3) what practices of building stronger readers in the classroom was I able to put into practice.

#### Data Analysis and Coding Process

I first began my analysis of my data by highlighting specific segments using a color code to identify the specific question. I then began entering the information into an Excel file, identifying the data by name, and then noting what of my three major research questions of Differentiation, High-Leverage Practices, and Reading had been demonstrated on the lesson plan as well as identifying issues or the level of presence of Differentiation, High-Leverage Practices,

and Reading Strengthening practices). Continuing this, I used the same coding terms (differentiation, reading, high-leverage) as I reviewed the recording of my teaching, identifying where in the videos, lesson plans, and teaching observations to identify my practices of the three themes.

**Figure 1:**

*a sample of my lesson plan analysis*

Date	Differentiation	High Leverage	Reading Improvement
3/14/2022	planned differentiation in terms of planned separation of task into discrete roles; Kahoot quiz to engage assessment	explaining student tasks, modeling, or discussing strategies.	use of vocabulary to build reading knowledge; book circle reading (group work) to engage students in difficult - scaffolded - tasks.
5/3/2022	Frayer models to support range of learning tasks	opening with expected practice of vocab.	Group analysis activity to engage students in finding and interpreting literature.
5/6/2022	Frayer models to support range of learning tasks. Other differentiation was demonstrated in the opportunities in how to engage in the activity regarding answers using a different form such as a Haiku (CT's suggestion) and in having the Ss respond with completing the Frayer model using drawing and writing options.	I began to develop my practice for leading an activity.	Frayer model and Blooket

**Differentiation: How did I design or practice differentiation in my lesson plans**

Starting from my first question: what are the practices of effective teachers, and how did I emulate or enact their practices in my own teaching, and what did that look like? My data for this question will not be entirely cohesive as my student teaching placement occurred at two different classrooms and schools and grade levels. Additionally, the data I have gathered from my lesson

plans and teaching journals along with feedback provided by both my cooperating teacher and the MAT program supervisor will demonstrate both how I enacted practices and where my teaching practices have room to grow. As part of my evidence, I analyzed a video segment of my teaching in which I attempted to engage in differentiation (figure 2).

**Figure 2**

*Video of [Lesson on Metaphors](#)*



In the video, I engage students in a discussion on what is the meaning or definition for a metaphor, engaging students in sharing their answers. Students were asked “What is your definition for a metaphor?” After the brief discussion in which 3 different students shared their definitions, I provided a definition from *Merriam Webster*, and assigned students to record down a “bite-sized” definition for the term in their Frayer model. While students are writing down the definitions, I walk through the room and check-in with students, I redirect questions to the class

with explanations of the task to those who I feel need it explained again. Students then complete the rest of the Frayer model using their own terms and examples.

### Figure 3

*Teacher Observations (Term 1)*

#### **Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

Siberians = basic comprehension and sentence writing Sumatrans = independent study - have completed the full book, writing their first essay Bengals (Tim's group) = comprehension and paragraphing - next steps = essay writing Bengals = comprehension questions and evidence-based paragraphs for this section Tim is working to use the words needed to communicate his expectations to students. We are focusing on "precision of language" as often the words and the intent do not match. Today has been a good day. The note cards have really helped with focus and clarity.

#### **Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

Checks for understanding - yes. Differentiation - Students are divided into three leveled reading groups. Today, Tim worked with the "Bengals" to guide them through this paragraphing activity

Figure 2 contains the observations regarding my practices from the first of the three terms of student-teaching. While I demonstrated differentiation here, the structure and organization of it was modeled and directly implemented with my Cooperating Teacher. I was following the plan that they devised rather than creating it myself. For this lesson, students were assigned a classroom text, *Wonder*, and were assigned to either Bengal or Siberians with students offered the opportunity to do Sumatran level. The Bengal students were operating at "standard" while Siberians or Sumatrans were for students either below or above the "standard" with modifications of the assigned task. After the end of Term 1, I was placed in a new classroom. The difference between Term 1 and 2 is that Term 1 occurs in an eight-grade classroom while Term 2 & 3 occurs in a 9<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts classroom.

### Figure 3

*Teacher Observations (Term 2) (3/8, 3/9,*

Cooperating Teacher (3/8/2022 – 3/9/2022)

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

This is an **emerging** area. Tim is making the effort and improving, but classroom management issues are getting in the way of some of the learning that could happen.

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

This has been difficult when students are not focused, disruptive, or trying to get the teacher off task. Mr. Pickle is making these efforts to check in for understanding, but not all learners are benefiting.

Supervising Teacher: 2/2/22 / 3/07/2022

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

Yes, Tim shows the vocab video and then reviews understanding, taking this a step further. Students are asked what part of speech each word is. Students demonstrated a clear understanding of both definitions and parts of speech. Tim gave students some tips to track down adjectives (-ous).

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

Yes, class proceeds like a Q&A, Tim introduces an activity and then allows students to informally ask questions about it. Students are invited to share examples during think-pair-share

Figure 3 details the comments and observations from both my cooperating teacher and supervisor for the WOU student-teaching program. Observations were done at different times during the term by each of my supervising and cooperating teachers. Each statement is directly related to their observations regarding my usage of differentiation and checks for understanding that occurred during their observations. Additional information in regard to these observations is that differentiation was implemented without direction from the Cooperating teacher and issues of classroom management and behaviors seems to have implications for my effectiveness in differentiation. In the first Cooperating teacher observation, I was teaching an introduction to *The Adventures of Ulysses* and had planned for include video information from *Myth and Monsters*.

The 2/2/2022 observation occurred near the beginning of term 2, and covered students working on reading and responding to *The Most Dangerous Game*, and engaging in the classroom vocabulary building weekly activities. Figure 4 details the observation data from Term 3 of my student teaching program. In this term, I was teaching the entire class-time with support from my cooperating teacher but otherwise with me as the lead teacher.

#### Figure 4

##### *Teacher Observations (Term 3)*

**Cooperating Teacher: 5/26/2022**

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

No

Supervising Teacher: 5/06/2022; 6/03/2022

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

During work time, both Tim and his CT work together to make sure students are on-task and understanding the learning. Tim checks in with each table group and has chatty conversations with each group. The students seem responsive to his efforts. Students seem open to Tim's efforts at rebuilding relationships. Students are deeply enthusiastic about the food activity

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

I did not observe much differentiation in this lesson. Tim explains in his lesson plan that students on IEPs are provided with notes so that they can focus on the lesson rather than writing notes.

I included the feedback from my cooperating teacher in (figure 4) despite the minimal description. The lesson topics during the first two observations related to engaging students in understanding poetry and poetic language. I found during this term that I was having the most trouble with engaging in differentiation with students from issues of planning. The data here shows that efforts for check-in were able to be seen, but little differentiation could be observed, something that I will explore further in Chapter V. I continue my examination of my



differentiation practices next by exploring and analyzing how my ESOL student teaching lesson plans demonstrate my ability to engage in differentiation for English language learners.

## Differentiation for English Language Learners

Figure 5

<p>5/23/2022          “How to Express Opinions”          Teacher does: Read and play dialogue for the lesson resources.          Teacher does: “Would you feel the same if your best friend moved?”          “How would you explain?”</p>
<p>5/24/2022          Use of sentence frames to help support students in their responses to the day’s activity.          Gamification of the learning: the vocabulary board game - students are required to use a word correctly in their own sentences (verbal).</p>
<p>5/25/2022          I am modulating my speech to ensure students are able to understand my directions and readings.          I provide time for students to respond to prompts rather than immediately provide the answers.          Use of a Graphic organizer to assist students, and the inclusion of sentence frames located on both the whiteboard and on the tabletop display frame.</p>
<p>5/26/2022  <i>ESOL sheltered strategies are highlighted throughout the lesson procedure.</i>          Slow/clear speech for instructions + modeling          Sentence frames for student support          On the board: I think that ____ because (opinion). ; (opinion) about ____ is ____.          Also display I agree that _____. or I disagree _____.</p>
<p>5/27/2022          Wait time for students to answer          Choral Reading          Graphic Organizer          Model: When I look at this picture, I see the two having fun - throwing snowballs, making snow angels - what do you picture in your head?</p>

The second theme of differentiation that explored was how to differentiate learning for English language learners, or Emergent Bilinguals (EBs), as is they are called more frequently in

the ESL community. I was focusing my research on EBs as part of my course of study was in the ESOL endorsement. For this program I completed a practicum requiring a sequence of five lessons which I will use for analysis of my ability to differentiate for Emergent Bilinguals. Figure 5 represents the type of differentiation that I utilized. I have color coded for the areas in which I provided differentiation to the students (5<sup>th</sup> Grade EBS). The unit of study in Figure 5 covered how to engage students in introducing and stating an opinion while using the lens of the Wild West, personal stories from the class text, and offered personal activities for students to engage in creating opinions. This class was a group of 5 young boys, from different language backgrounds, and abilities. My lessons plans were drafted by referring to their assigned classroom text.

In my analysis of the lesson plans, a commonality of differentiation occurs primarily in the use of sentence frames and varying questions to elicit student understanding of the assigned questions or prompts. While my lesson plans listed only simple questions, I would frequently find ways to alter the question for example “What would it be like to move?” might be changed to “What would you feel if your best friend were to move far away?”

### **Creating inclusive classrooms**

This is the minor theme in which I have the least documentation to use for evidence. My class consisted of mostly homogenous rather than heterogenous students both in terms of ability and ethnicity. Most of my goals here were to create an equal opportunity for students to engage and interact without requiring them to write everything down. An example of my methods for creating an inclusive classroom was to make use of digital tools such as Kahoot or Blooket.

Figure 6 is an example of what my students used while studying and practicing for their poetry

unit. Much like Kahoot, Blooket makes use of a multiple question “quiz” format, but it offers additional function by allowing a set to be assigned as homework, and different game modes.

**Figure 6**

The screenshot shows a Blooket quiz interface. At the top left is a thumbnail image of a green mug and a book with the word 'poetry' written on it. The title of the quiz is 'Literary Tools for understanding Poetry'. Below the title is a description: 'Some of the core literary devices and terms to help with further literature study.' The creator's name is 'Pickle9399'. There are three buttons: 'Host', 'Solo', and a star icon. Below the quiz title, it says 'Edited 2 months ago', '99 Plays', and '0 Favorites'. The first question is numbered '1' and asks: 'A reference to another work of literature, person, or event'. The time limit is '20 sec'. There is a 'Hide Answers' button and a 'Random Answer Order' checkbox. The answer choices are: 'Allusion', 'Carpe Diem', 'Diction', and 'Euphemism'.

### **High-Leverage Practices: What teaching practices did I make use of in my lessons.**

My second goal for analysis from this year of student teaching was to determine how effective I was in enacting evidence-based practices. Examining my lesson plans, my teacher notes, and teacher observations, and my PowerPoint presentations, I have documented the high-leverage practices (HLPs) that I was successful in implementing as well as pinpointing where there is room for improvement in my future practices. Figures 7 will demonstrate how I have documented each specific high-leverage practice and in a collection of 6 lesson plans from the three student-teaching terms as representation of my ability to utilize high-leverage practices.

**Figure 7**

High Leverage Practices by common practices & frequency from six sample lesson plans.

Leading Group Discussion:	4
Eliciting and Interpreting: Reading questions predominately	5
Coordinating and Adjusting Instruction	3
Analyzing Instruction for purpose of improving it	5
Designing Single & Sequences of lessons	5

As seen from (figure 7), I engaged more in HLPs that centered on analyzing and planning for lessons. The analysis and design occurred primarily in the second and third student-teaching terms, which is reflective of the assigned tasks – term 1 required 3-5 lessons, while term 2 and 3 required 7-10 and 10-15 lessons respectively. The weakest HLP in which I engaged was that of coordinating and adjusting my instruction – something that is noted in both my personal reflections and the teacher observations of my instruction.

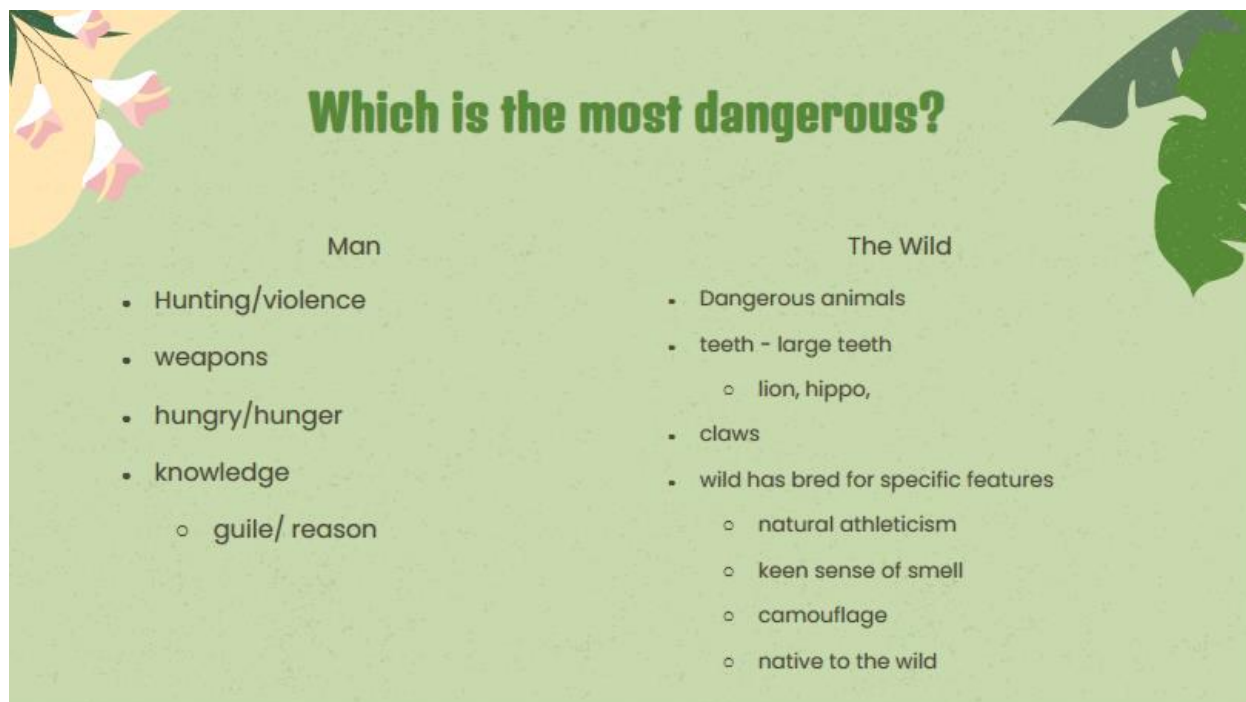
**Leading Group Discussions****Figure 8** *The Most Dangerous Game* hook & question

1:12 mins	Watch the Trailer for <i>The Most Dangerous Game</i> (1932)
3-5 mins	“What do we know about the story from this trailer?”

My discussion question primes the students to build a sense of knowledge about the short story we will begin reading after watching a short video summary. After building some

background, I switched to the group activity in which we built together answers to the question: Which is more dangerous – Man or the Wild? (figure 10).

**Figure 9** “The Most Dangerous Game”



I continued to make use of these discussion questions in my practice. I changed how I used them in my lesson plans for “The Most Dangerous Game.” To help drive student connections and to help them build thoughtful discussions, I began my class by having them watch a trailer for the film, and then began with a discussion about what were some take aways from the short video (Figure 9).

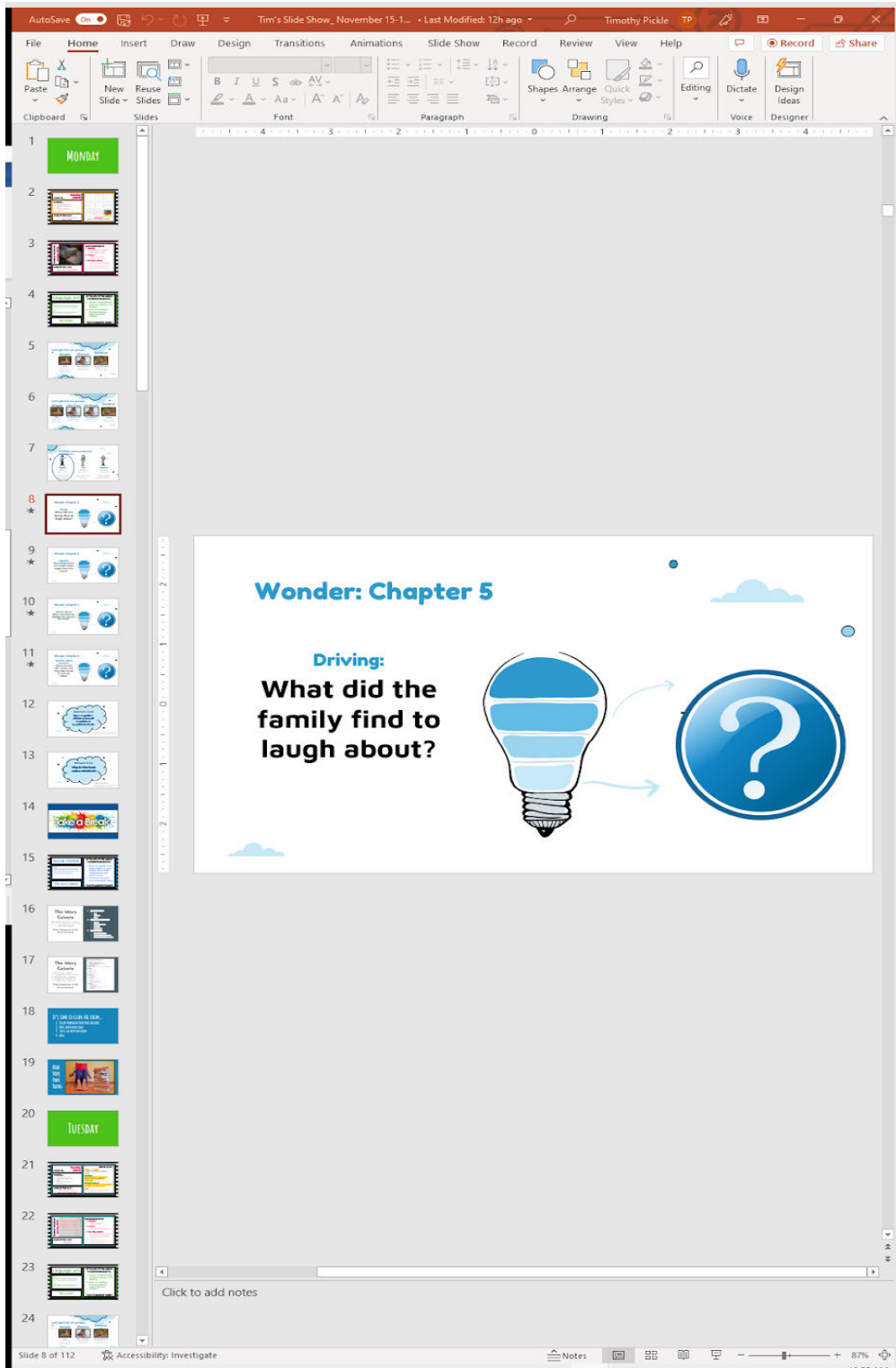
At the beginning of the activity, this slide was blank except for the Titles (Which is the most dangerous? Man / The Wild). Student engagement during this discussion was quite high as my supervising teacher noted in her observation “I really like the way that the notes became interactive - Tim projected a pre-made slide on the board and filled it in during class discussion (which is the more dangerous, man or the wild?). Students were really engaged in this activity”

(Observation, 2/22/2022). I would rephrase or restate student statements for clarity in this slide, however, the bulk of the work had been done by the students.

### **Eliciting and Interpreting Students' Thinking**

Group discussions, both small and whole group, are important tools in engaging students in explaining and exploring their own learning. While not present in every one of my lessons, as seen in figure 7, I did use them often in the 6 sample lessons. For my first placement and term 1 of student teaching, I relied upon the discussion questions that my cooperating teacher had designed that engaged students in a discussion of their reading at each “chapter.” The discussion questions were both in the use of on their reading worksheet and in the form of a Google Slides presentation (figure 8).

Figure 10 Discussion question *Wonder* chapter 5



While students would most often answer the question on the page, I would also sporadically ask them to both write down their answers **and** share / discuss with their group members or with the rest of the class. The benefit for the discussion questions is that they enabled me to see what the students knew, and where or what they were not understanding, enabling me to make **adjustments in instruction**.

### **Figure 11**

Later examples of group/class discussions were how I made use of online videos as a discussion point. Figures 13 and 14 are examples of how I made use of digital videos as an introduction for discussion along with required directions to facilitate the discussion. Figure 13 occurred in my poetry unit covering the topic of personification. I had students watch the short video while having the question that I wanted them to answer at the top of the slide: “What is this [video] about?” This roughly two minute clip contained several old advertisements from Geico and others that utilized personification. While the clip does give away the name of the literary device, I was able to tease out student understanding by asking the following questions: “Why is this personification? And what does it mean then?” Students were able to express through the class discussion that because the pig acted like a human it meant that it was being given human qualities, leading to our literary device definition and later Frayer model activity.




**Figure 12** *What is [Personification]?*



**Figure 13** *Lyric Detectives:*

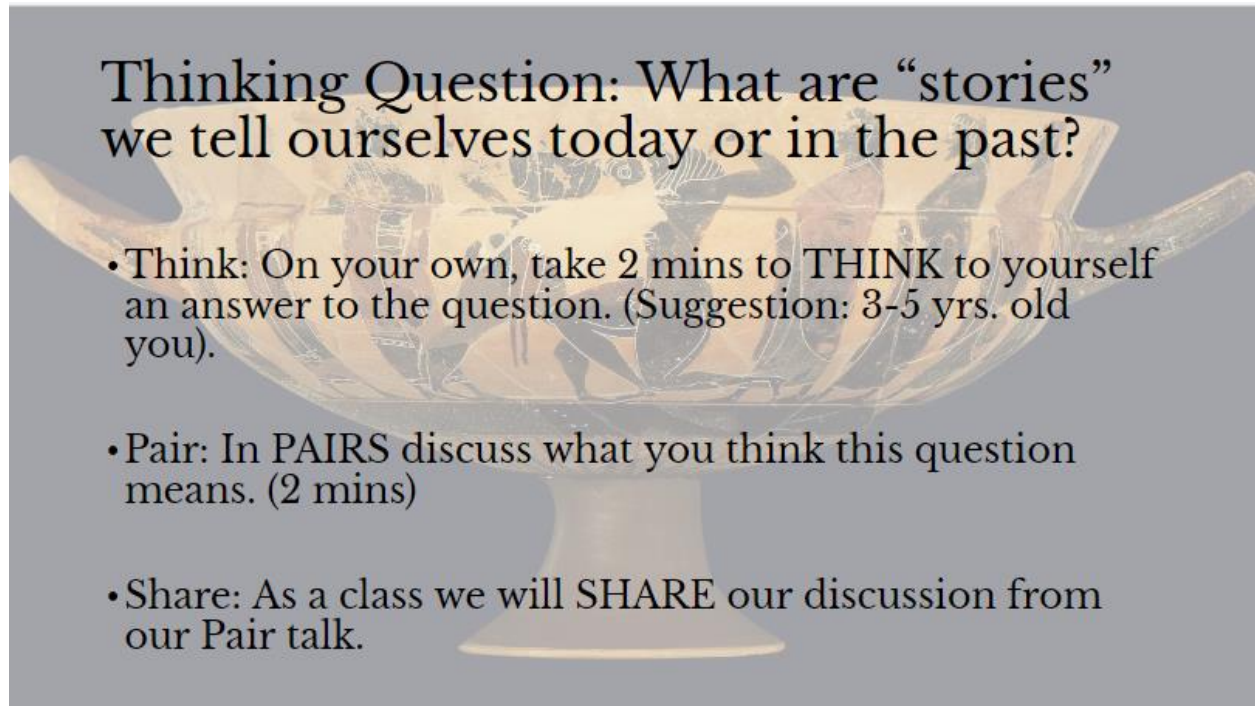
*Lyric Detectives:  
Can we find the  
Personification  
and the other  
devices in this  
song?*



*Don't forget:  
We're doing  
this in our  
groups!!*

**Roles:**  
 1 student will write the discussion and share it with the class for their group  
 1 student will draw an image representing the literary device (Use COLOR preferably)  
 1-2 students will explain what they believe is the personification or other literary device.

**Figure 14** Odyssey intro question



**Thinking Question: What are “stories” we tell ourselves today or in the past?**

- **Think:** On your own, take 2 mins to **THINK** to yourself an answer to the question. (Suggestion: 3-5 yrs. old you).
- **Pair:** In **PAIRS** discuss what you think this question means. (2 mins)
- **Share:** As a class we will **SHARE** our discussion from our **Pair** talk.

The next evidence of the use and implementation of leading group discussions comes from my *Odyssey* unit in which we read the version *The Adventures of Ulysses*. At this point we had yet to open the story. Instead, I was laying the groundwork for them to understand the many cultural and literary reasons for reading this text. I began my unit by asking students this entry hook question: “What are some of the stories we tell ourselves today?” (figure 11). I had students write down their answers in the form of a student journal, but regrettably I did not keep digital copies to use as evidence, a common practice that I used in addition with group discussion (figure 12). The activity represented in Figure 12 was from a later lesson of the *Odyssey* unit and was after we had started reading the first few sections of *The Adventures of Ulysses*. In this lesson I had utilized the discussion question to engage students in a deeper conversation about the text and had ground rules that previous instances lacked: what needed to constitute a discussion (not talking about everyday activities or non-topic related conversations).

Figure (15)

### *Discussion Question: What is the theme for the Odyssey?*

#### **Group discussion rules:**

#### **1. Conversations need to be on topic!**

- a. I shouldn't catch you talking about the game or what you want to do after school!

#### **2. Decide who will present your discussion to the rest of the class.**

#### **3. Try to dig below the surface. Don't go for the easy/low-hanging fruit responses. "E.g. don't say "The theme is a journey"**

### **Coordinating and Adjusting Instruction**

Coordinating and adjusting instruction is an important HLP, however from figure 7, pg. (x), it is still something that I am working on addressing as it is my weakest practice of my High-Leverage Practices. Transition activities and being able to coordinate when and moving students through them is a cornerstone HLP, and while I still have much to work on, my practice and ability of utilizing this HLP has increased over the year. In my first placement, my cooperating teacher indicated during her second observation that "Tim has become better at staying focused on the goal – target." My supervising teacher noted that my directions from the lesson observed were direct and clear, but also noted suggestions to work on: "Make sure you give students enough time to retrieve their supplies, check to make sure everyone has followed instructions, and then give directions" (Citation needed). Another way that I have attempted with coordinating

instruction is through the use of daily agenda's that I posted in the classroom and in Google Classroom (Figure 15).

### Figure 15

Our Agenda today is simple:

- 1) Vocab Blooket Review
- 2) Poetic Terms 4 Corners
- 3) Lit Terms Blooket if Time.
- 4) Reminder: Work on your One-Pager for "Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman, "Happy" by Pharrell Williams or 1 other song of your choice.

### Analyzing Instruction for Purposes of Improving It

Analysis is a critical skill that educators need to develop and utilize. We practice it every day as we teach. Are the students engaged, does this student understand the question, and many other questions are things we ask during the teaching, but just as crucial is to reflect and ask the harder question: what could I do better for next time? I engaged in this practice both through solitary analysis in the creation of my teaching journal(s) and through the use of discussion with my cooperating teacher at the end of every day. One issue that has been highlighted from my review of my teaching journal is that an area of improvement I need to focus on is behavior management – not surprising as I noticed that few instances were found in my lesson plans regarding behavior strategy goals. The following is a section from my teaching journal regarding some observations:

My goal for today's lesson was to do some review of the key information of the chapters, but lost several minutes getting classroom back in order from off-task behaviors. Dealing with the behaviors disrupted my lesson pacing.

In reflection what I notice is that I had spent much on noticing the behavior, but less was spent towards planning how I was going to prevent a re-occurrence. Another excerpt from my teaching journal is where I began to focus on how the students reacted to some of my classroom practices in regard to focusing on improving student engagement/behavior.

Class went much smoother. I am noticing still some hesitancy on doing the sustained silent reading, especially from some of the boys in the back of the classroom, but I think finding materials that might be more interesting for them to read will help, but I don't want to spend a fortune on them. I saw a definite room of behavior improvement from Jay today, who behaved very well. I also noticed that it was great during the exercises where they had little room to bounce between so I will start using this method of assigning groups and giving them little opportunity to argue with me. Additionally, the I am authority list seemed to generate a high interest from the students as it was self-referential.

I had been engaging students into reading independently at the beginning of the class as a method of building community and practice. From my observations, I noted that students had begun to buy into the activity, I was finding ways to motivate them to engage, however, I still had some concerns and issues – funding for instance. Additionally, through conversation through one student, when I had them read independently, she would scan the page rather than actually “read.”

### **Designing Single Lesson and Sequences of Lessons**

It's impossible to implement a program of teaching without the ability to design both single and multiple step lessons. It's a stamina building process for me, but as the student

teaching year went on, I was designing more multiple step lessons – however, usually of a max of 5 lessons at a time. Much of the evidence and data I have gathered to analyze for my ability to design both single and multiple lessons come from the teaching observations, and of course the sequences of my lessons.

Referring to one of the lesson plans that I created during the second term of student teaching, I pay attention to the Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills section of the template. It is here that I connect the skills students need to have obtained prior, but also acknowledge how I know that students are capable of the task for that day. In figure 16, you can see that my acknowledgment of the skills has evolved into clarity and specificity over the two terms, as I compare the early lesson plan from *The Most Dangerous Game* lessons to the those that I drafted for the *Odyssey* and finally the poetry and *Romeo & Juliet* units.

### Figure 16

**Pre-Requisite Knowledge and/or Skills:**

Students will need to have knowledge of how to cite textual information that provides evidence to support their analysis. Students will need to practice reading for analysis of characters and their traits.

**How I know the students have this:**

Prior lesson units have had students work on analyzing character traits, and have started writing an essay centered on how character traits

**Pre-Requisite Knowledge and/or Skills:**

Students need to understand how Greek Mythology has specific patterns and themes and how these stories relate to the modern day.

**How I know the students have this:**

We have spent the last week reviewing key information regarding the Greek Mythos, researching a specific deity or hero from Greek Mythology, and viewing the first episode of *Myth and Monsters* centered on the hero's journey.

Students need to have knowledge and skills for identifying literary terms and figures of speech such as Metaphor, Personification, Similes, and other tools.

How I know the students have this:

The last four days have been spent engaging students in aspects of analysis, attainment of literary terms, and responding to sensory images or experiences.

Prerequisite Knowledge and/or Skills:

Students will need to have read the introduction slides for ACT IV of *Romeo and Juliet* prior to class today. Furthermore, they need to have processed the information using a form of note-taking of pictures or written notes using an organizer.

How I know the students have this:

I spend one class period the day before guiding students through an understanding of the act which is read the following day. Students are tasked with completing a graphic note organizer using picture notes such as Comic Strip notes or may use written notes, which are submitted and evaluated for student understanding/comprehension.

Each of these lesson plans are part of a larger unit, from 3 (*TMG*) to 7-10 (*TAU*) 5-6 (Poetry) and 10-15 (*R&J*). What is recognizable as I looked at each of them is that by the final term in which I taught *Romeo and Juliet*, I was able to create a detailed and understandable acknowledgement of how this particular lesson fits in with its sequence in terms of what the students should have been doing in the days prior to teaching it. For example, in the *R&J* lesson plan, I noted that students will need to have read the ACT IV in the days before this class period.

To analyze how I have developed my practice of designing and implementing single and multiple lesson sequences, I examine the teaching observation reports that were generated from my cooperating teachers and my supervisory teacher for Western. I began my reading and analysis by looking at the observations from my beginning student teaching term. My cooperating teacher and I determined that I would teach my planned 3-5 day lesson unit using support from her. I taught a small unit on the book, *Wonder*, read in class and worked with the students on completing the accompanying writing tasks. Laura, my cooperating teacher, noted that at this time, while the unit had an overarching goal, I was more focused on single lesson units: "Our focus is on seeing how one lesson leads to another." During my second term of

student teaching my next cooperating teacher, Debbie, states that sequencing is “an emerging area” and during her next observation that term: “more support for students [is needed].” Turning to my supervising teacher’s feedback. She states that my learning targets are implied and not clearly communicated. This is something I feel connects clearly to whether there is a clear sequence of lessons. Later observations have reinforced that this is an additional area of practice that I will need to continue to develop.

### **Building Stronger Readers in the ELA Classroom**

I was interested in how can I help develop students into becoming a stronger reader. I know that not every student has an innate desire to read; however, it is a skill that they need to develop, nonetheless. While doing my analysis for the previous themes, I have come to the realization that my topic of analysis was too broad. While I had desired to implement a program to help them become stronger readers, I had not designated a specific task. In the classrooms that I co-taught with my cooperating teachers there was a different environment and approach to reading. My first term was spent at a middle school, and my cooperating teacher there spent significant time developing a program that took place at the end of every period: Read Your Own Thing or RYOT time. This was a set 15 minutes of independent reading. During the time I lead taught, I of course would implement it as well. At my second placement, reading was not an everyday thing. Reading development was primarily through weekly vocabulary building activities (figure 17) such as vocabulary sentences and weekly quizzes.

During part of term 2 & 3, I attempted to implement a similar sustained silent reading (SSR) activity. I enacted this for a week of teaching, but discontinued it for several reasons. First, I had not fully planned how to integrate the practice of SSR into an assessable practice. My goal with the program was to have the students choose their own text and engage in the activity of



reading. This meant that my practice was meant to teach but instead it had only the fun and nothing to support the learning such as the usage of reading logs and pages read. The second reason for why I discontinued the practice is that I had limited buy-in from my cooperating teacher and on the days in which I couldn't teach, due to medical appointments or in the case of team teaching, students were not offered the opportunity to engage in SSR.

### **Conclusion**

From analyzing the multiple types of data: videos, lesson plans, evaluations of observations and instructional materials, I have been able to build a stronger coherent understanding of my teaching practices that I have developed over the course of this program and project. I was able to see which of my research questions had insufficient information or data and was able to posit reasons for what occurred and how I could make this project stronger in the future.

## Chapter V

### Conclusions And Significance

As part of the process of this project, I have been able to build and understand a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of my teaching practices. This has provided me with a clearer path of what I need to do to become a better teacher, specifically regarding my three research questions and the difficulties and issues that affected the process of this project. My three research questions (1) Designing differentiation, English Language learner instruction, and inclusive classrooms; (2) Evidence-based practices: high-leverage practices, effective instruction, and research on student centered classrooms; (3) Building stronger readers in the ELA classroom, reading workshops, creating cooperative reading environments, and technology to advance reading. While analyzing the data that corresponded to my first research question – differentiation – I realized that I had been too general. The research that I had read was widespread and through conversations with my seminar instructor, analysis of my data including my lesson plans and teacher observations and my lesson videos, I had only sprinklings of differentiation to support my topic.

Analyzing my data which related to evidence-based practices, I focused on finding data that demonstrated some practices of high-leverage practices and effective instruction examples as well as student-centered classroom. While high-lighting the sections of my data to collect into an Excel file, I realized that most of my data corresponded to high-leverage practices while again not fully developed data to support the other two sub-themes. Lastly, I had minimal data for my final theme – developing stronger readers. This occurred due to failing to fully implement the program, but also from insufficient proof of concept to set-up.

### **Strengths, Weaknesses, & Room for Growth**

It would be overly simple to state that I had gained nothing from this year of study due to having too vague of research targets. While I will not say that I was able to clearly implement each and every goal of my research – again a cause of unclear and general topics – I did make the attempt to engage in utilizing some of the information. For example, in regard to differentiation, I attempted to place it in my lessons, but it was not as clear as I had hoped it would be near the end of the years journey. I can see clearly in my analysis the difference from the given/provided lesson plans from my first CT to my next CT who allowed me the necessary stumbling that I had not fully incorporated differentiation in my lessons. I had attempt in my own way to differentiate instruction by the usage of Frayer models, BLOOKETS and Kahoots. But in hindsight those are not true strategies of differentiation. I was able to see differentiation the clearest from my ESOL practicum data as it *required* that differentiation takes place.

Moving from the shallow data of my first research questions, I was happy to note that I had plenty of data to support my acquisition of several High leverage practices. However, that is not to say that I obtained mastery. Instead, what is clear from the data was that specific practices such as adjusting and coordinating my instruction is a target for improvement, my ability to understand how lesson connect had made improvement during this year of teaching. Additionally, it became clear that improvements were not a smooth slope, rather they resembled an EKG line – ups and downs of practicing and forgetting and then implementing.

Finally, my goal of implementing a program of developing stronger readers was not able to be realized due to insufficient preparation and insufficient levels of assessment. I was able to note in my data collection that students for the most part did enjoy engaging in silent sustained reading which offers some hope for future practice.

## **Limitations & Caveats**

In the end, as I analyzed my data, I was able to notice that much of my practices this year have major room for improvement. Starting with my understanding of differentiation – my goal for the future is to pick one type of differentiation and analyze the effects of it on my students rather than a dispersed collection of types. Similarly, what stood out from my analysis of high-leverage practices is a connection to lesson sequencing, adjusting my instruction both in planning and in the middle of teaching, as well as other HLPS that I was unable to fully collect data on my engagement of them in my teaching practices. Meanwhile, my main goal of increasing student reading identity and independence was unable to be realized due to not having specificity in how I would enact it, how I would assess it, and what I expected the students to get out of it.

## **Conclusion**

While this action research project has at times exasperated me, it has helped me see more clearly where I am as a future teacher, where I am as an individual, and where and what areas to improve in myself. I learned that being too general or wide focused in my ideas and concepts are just as inhibiting both in my practice and in my learning. I learned that I have much room to grow in my usage of differentiation, and that nothing is ever one-and-done. Both for my students and myself. In the future, I hope to be able to transition from the confused to the confident teacher, and I know that this transition will occur primarily by continuing to analyze and research my teaching practices each year.

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## Appendix A

### My Student Teaching Journal

9/16/2021

What are the systems that I am seeing in Laura's Classroom?

So right away, when the students enter the classroom, they have a set of organization on the left that is clearly defined/labeled for them to access without the teacher constantly having to do the work for them. The work area has lots of organization to find easily important documents and necessary items without digging through everything. Wide open spaces in the classroom allow for students to navigate around with plenty of space and low issues.

9/21/2021

Laura is reading and doing a pre-assessment with students reading along while she reads the story. She uses a broadcasting mic and speaker to save her throat and to be overheard

Has students work quietly, reminds and checks into what each student is doing /focusing students on task that is assigned. Ss are reminded to function autonomously: assignment goes into an assigned & labeled bin and then finishing up with reading time for the last 10 mins or so.

What questions do I have: How does Laura maintain student on task time? Handle minor/major disruptions or redirect students?

Has students return the name tags to co-teacher or to the bin

Flex period

Not much

PM Block

Students are to start on work, when they enter and given a minute to self-start, but then reminded.

How does Laura handle students like Benji in terms of reminders?

Write Away Journal Structure:

They are to copy all words on slide that are highlighted in yellow,

Then they are to make a story based on the to-do: using some of the terms in yellow.

Laura continues to pay attention to what students are doing, using the word "job" to refocus students on what they need to do in the room (as well as what we as teachers are supposed to-do).

Reminds students to place their papers and supplies back in their bags as needed

After warm-up,

Has students direct to agenda

Maintaining students on task: expectations on day, 1,2,3, should be where they end at the end of the year. **Set up the environment where students will be sitting**, that I believe they can do what I'm asking. Prove that it is something they can do and want to do.

Ss taught that they will not be successful. So begin the term with building trust and success! We all need help.

Work time is about 15-20 mins.

Minor interruptions: wait time

Teaching journal 4/4/2022

Several instances of misbehavior. It seems that the right back of the classroom is at this time still not fully recognizing the behaviors that should be expected of them in a classroom learning environment. We have struggled with setting expectations for independent work, body boundaries and other expectations. Specific behaviors that I am noticing is a pattern of physicality between Darien and Riley that extends to Owen. Hunter is presenting a negative affect in his bearing/willingness to learn. It is becoming quite clear that "teeth" is going to be needed to handle the students misbehaviors in terms of their getting off task and attempting to stall the learning environment.

Students specific (mis)behaviors today:

Journey – his behavior in class is becoming very negative, he is presenting as unwilling to learn and otherwise distracting to his peers and myself. Rolling on desks, treating the classroom furniture as couches or not a place to learn.

Deacon: his actions are demonstrating an easily to drag off task person, but nothing terribly major.

Michael: showing an unwillingness to be here or engage, caught on phone needed reminders to put it away.

Riley: attempting several times to drag discussions off topic and otherwise to disengage from learning. Physically engages with Darien (behind him) does not listen or follow directions. (need to follow through with my directives specifically to ensure that he follows them)

Darien: Treats the classroom as a place in which he just has to be present, demonstrates low-work ethic in terms of learning and engagement.

Owen: Can be drug off task by his peers.

Hunter: specific behaviors today – engages in play fight/pattern of rudeness to Deacon. Distracting him. Hunter, I suspect, is responsible for the torn book page. Otherwise, he does not engage in classroom wide disruptive behavior.

My goal for today's lesson was to do some review of the key information of the chapters, but lost several minutes due to getting classroom back in order from off-task behaviors. Dealing with the behaviors disrupted my lesson pacing. I think another seating chart is going to be required to separate these individuals and get them back into a learning environment, but they are also

struggling with understanding the needed social skills to enable them to exist effectively and productively in a classroom environment.

Their behavior today during the break tells me that this is not an option for them – the core group decided that they were going to head to another classroom rather than the optional outdoor walk break of 5 mins that I offered. In the future I will offer it for students that used the time effectively, but the students will not be allowed out of the room. (or at least the misbehaving ones).

What went well during the lesson?

Students did seem to engage better after I discovered that the cord for the projector was disconnected. Additionally, the students that were there ready to learn were able to gain understanding of key information and were able to present it clearly after some time and prompting, (I might need to review the chapter events again as students demonstrated that they had not fully understood their reading.)

Pacing was also an issue as I need to ensure that all necessary supplies are available to me in the front of the classroom, but I am currently bouncing back and forth attempting to track down supplies.

I will tomorrow morning ensure that I have everything I need for my lesson on the cart beside the document camera. I'm beginning to feel like I am a failure here, I'm not constantly running into issues of getting students to respect themselves and their peers and that this is an area of my practice that I need to learn more about. I'm worried that if I take the job out in Houston that I'm going to fail, that I'm going to be far away from a safety network and that I'll be fired within a month. I know this isn't fair, but gah, I hate feeling like a failure. How do I move beyond this, how do I start getting the students to behave in ways that is respectful? How do I stop feeling like a failure? How do I take these ideas and then translate them into en-actable lesson? How do I wrest back control of the classroom from these students who just flat don't want to engage?

4/5/2022

Some minor issues with misbehavior; however, Darien decided that mid-way through the reading to express his boredom by creating fart noises on his arm. I sent him out of the room to reset and was intending to write him a referral; however, Deborah, my cooperating teacher wrote him a referral immediately. Other issues were relating to Riley and his need to willfully engage in overly friendly actions (chatty with peers) and Deacon deciding to move himself ack to students. (constantly references 'racism' etc.) I need to have a frank discussion with him regarding my directions in regard to why I have him move (because I let him set forward, but as students move around it was becoming an issue for him with distracting peers).

4/11/2022

Behavior issues from bad timing and technical issues were present – computer bluescreened during the formative quiz to gauge student understanding. Specific behaviors that occurred were constant off task or derailing behaviors that were arising from lack of management behaviors. Under the advice from my Cooperating Teacher and the recommendation from the Principal of Sweethome Middle, I bought *The First Days of School* by Harry Wong as a recommendation for classroom management skills.

4/12/2022

Today's class was a dramatically different environment from yesterday. I began with the intention of having students understanding fully what my expectations for them are in each of the activities and the general classroom environment.

Plan for lesson using a poem using the term

4/18/2022

Public speech class this morning was a blast, students had high engagement and were willing to do the complex work required to interpret and understand the textbook. We used the remaining time to wrap up our introductory speeches and

English 9<sup>th</sup>

It seems like the students are actively or intentionally not wanting to interpret the poems and works in class. (when students to derail – beat a discussion or let it go – (let it go when students are unproductive let them go).

Comments (saboteur to derail the class when doing discussion – tighten the ship by giving activities that they just do - ) .

4/19/2022

My goals for today are to engage students in both a continuing development of silent reading and building their ability to read independently and to find alternative paths to helping them learn to incorporate information effectively. I have found activities to engage them in reading, and a poem that will be less controversial for the students in the classroom who are not yet mature enough to handle reading about romantic poems or engage in discussions about them.

4/21/22

Class went much smoother, I am noticing still some hesitancy on doing the sustained silent reading, especially from some of the boys in the back of the classroom, but I think finding materials that might be more interesting for them to read will help, but I don't want to spend a fortune on them. I saw a definite room of behavior improvement from Jay today, who behaved very well. I also noticed that it was great during the exercises where they had little room to bounce between so I will start using this method of assigning groups and giving them little opportunity to argue with me. Additionally, the I am authority list seemed to generate a high interest from the students as it was self-referential.

5/24/22

Students were very rambunctious and out of control at the beginning of the period. Several of the backrow were constantly off task, and disruptive – per my conversation with Kyla Dozier, I am going to begin instituting an attention getting action (I'll make a decision) and will begin using that action exclusively from now on. Other items are that students responded to the play best when I assigned roles for students, so that tomorrow I will assign students a role in the play that they will need to speak for. There will not be enough time to bring in the informational text, due to off-task behavior.

Directions given to students needs to be clear and direct, give them no time to argue – write directions on the board clearly so that they are referenceable. I will begin giving students 5 mins at the end of the period where they can stand outside, but if they refuse to work or take longer, I begin to take that from their 5 min break.

## Appendix B

**Lesson Plan “The Most Dangerous Game” Teacher Candidate: Tim Pickle**  
**Date of Lesson: 2/22/2022**

Lesson Title/Description: Mini-unit on Short stories, focusing on “The Most Dangerous Game”		
Lesson # 1 of 2/3	Time Allotted for this Lesson: 45 mins	
<p>Standards:</p> <p>9-10.RL.1: Analyze what the text says explicitly as well as inferentially; cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support the analysis.</p> <p>9-10.RL.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding the development of complex characters over the course of a text...</p>	<p>Central Focus:</p> <p>The purpose of this lesson is to build upon student knowledge of character and how authors use complex characters to build upon a theme. In this lesson, we are reading “The Most Dangerous Game” and analyzing both what the text is saying at a literal level, and how the author uses complex characters and their interactions to advance the plot or develop the theme of this story.</p>	<p>Learning Targets:</p> <p>Students will be able to demonstrate an ability to <b>analyze</b> what a text says explicitly and cite textual evidence <u>by completing the attached worksheet.</u></p> <p>Students will be able to <b>analyze</b> how an author <u>uses characters and their interactions to develop a theme or plot.</u></p>
<p>Pre-Requisite Knowledge and/or Skills:</p> <p>Students will need to have knowledge of how to cite textual information that provides evidence to support their analysis. Students will need to have practice reading for analysis of characters and their traits.</p> <p>How I know the students have this:</p> <p>Prior lesson units have had students work on analyzing character traits, and have started writing an essay centered on how character traits</p>		
Academic language that will be used in lesson: Analysis, inference, citing, interpretation		
Strategies and opportunities for supporting academic language:		

<p>Students will complete an assigned worksheet that provides a framework to support students analysis of learning standards.</p>		
<p>Connections to students' "Funds of Knowledge"/assets, prior knowledge, and or/interdisciplinary connections that will be made during the lesson:</p> <p>The assigned text is a required text of the English 9<sup>th</sup> Grade literature course at the school, and builds on student analysis of literary characters and how characters support and develop the advancement of plot and theme in literature.</p>		
<p>How have you addressed the needs of diverse learners ? (Ex: IEPs, 504s, linguistic &amp; cultural diversity, students without prerequisite knowledge, etc.)</p> <p>In accordance with the supplied students on IEPs and 504 plan, I have made the worksheet completable online for students needing technological support as required in their IEP.</p>		
<p>What technology supports or integration are included in this lesson?</p> <p>Students have access to the worksheet both in print and digital format (Google Classroom).</p>		
<p>Materials/Equipment/Supplies/Technology/Preparation:</p> <p>Students have their assigned textbooks with the reading included.</p> <p>Students will need to have access to computer or pencil.</p> <p>Large Screen TV to project and display worksheet or Google Classroom as needed, and display the short film trailer for the movie adaptation of the reading.</p> <p>Teacher copy of the text or textbook.</p>		
	<p><b>Procedure: TEACHER DOES...</b></p> <p><i>Include "look fors" and other ways you'll observe and check with students to be sure they are engaged in the learning.</i></p>	<p><b>Procedure: STUDENTS DO...</b></p> <p><i>Include evidence of student engagement that you'll include / watch for to monitor student learning</i></p>
<p><b>10 mins</b></p>	<p>Class Hook (for week).</p> <p>Vocab video + 7 vocab sentences</p>	<p>Students should watch the video and then write down the 7 key vocab and their definitions.</p>



	Teacher writes the words down on board and their definitions as the video plays.	
Time  (1:12 mins)	Motivation/Hook:  Watch the trailer for the 1932 “The Most Dangerous Game”	Motivation/Hook:  The video sets the scene for student background knowledge of what the text will reference.
3-5 mins	Teaching OR Group OR  Independent Application:  Ask Students: What do we know about the story from this short trailer?  Notify students that the female character was added only for the film; she does not exist in the short story.	Teaching OR Group OR  Independent Application:  Share: Students should be able to identify what the “game” of the title references (Man).
5-10 mins	<b>Teaching</b> OR Group OR  Independent Application:  Student refresher on literature themes  Display the thinking question: Man vs Wild on PowerPoint and then have them provide information that teacher copies to screen.	Teaching OR Group OR  Independent Application:  Students listen and engage with slides ( what is more dangerous Man vs the Wild?)
2-5 mins	Teaching OR Group OR  Independent Application:  Transition to turn in papers and grab textbooks/prepare to read	Teaching OR Group OR  Independent Application:  Students turn in papers and then grab textbooks and return to seats

30-40	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  Read “the Most Dangerous Game”  Teacher begins reading and then engages in popcorn reading.	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  Students are following along and read the text, engaging in popcorn reading
15 mins	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  Begin to have students work on answering the reading questions assigned on their computers.	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  Students put their books aside and begin to answer the reading questions.
5	Closure:  Wrap up with discussion on literature terms or reminder of continuing the story the next day.	Closure:
<p><u>Key assessments and assignments</u> that provide evidence of student engagement and learning collected during/as a result of this lesson:</p> <p>The reading questions will be used to provide evidence of student engagement but will be collected when ready to submit, as a google doc in Google Classroom, I can observe whether students are engaging in the assignment and how much effort or work was put into it.</p>		
<p>Theoretical, Pedagogical, and/or Lines of Research that Justify Your Instructional Choices:</p> <p>I believe in following a student focused learning environment where students are seen as providers of knowledge over me lecturing them.</p>		
<p><i>These reflection questions are provided to help you think about your lessons AFTER you have taught them. Please complete these questions after you've taught to help you with your instructional commentary, and then delete the reflections when you submit your lesson plans for you edTPA.</i></p>		

<p>Reflection:</p> <p>Did all the students meet the learning target? How do you know?</p> <p>Not all students met my learning target, several seemed disengaged during the lesson, showed little work done in their reading response questions.</p>
<p>Reflection:</p> <p>2. Describe any changes you made <i>as you were teaching</i> the lesson.</p> <p>Spent more time on the refresher and slide building as students were showing more engagement in that section.</p>
<p>Reflection:</p> <p>3. What would you change about this lesson plan before you teach it again? Pay attention to situations where students either did not learn or already knew.</p> <p>I would probably provide printed copies of the assignment for students the prefer to handwrite over digital, it also is an easier way of engaging students in mid-reading discussion rather than post reading.</p>
<p>Reflection:</p> <p>4. How did the results of this lesson influence the way that you will teach in the future?</p> <p>I am working on finding ways to ensure students are on task and always listening before speaking or beginning my lecture.</p>

**Lesson Plan: Odyssey Teacher Candidate: Tim Pickle**  
**3/7/2022**

**Date of Lesson:**

Lesson Title/Description: Introduction to the Odyssey, Gods, Goddesses, & Heros.	
Lesson # 1 of 7	Time Allotted for this Lesson: 90 mins total (2– 45 mins)

<p>Standards:</p> <p>9-10.W.7: conduct short as well as more comprehensive research projects to answer a question</p> <p>9-10.SL.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions</p>	<p>Central Focus:</p> <p>This lesson serves as a foundation of connection for students prior to reading the story. by having them research and present their research of the Greek Deities and Heros present in the Odyssey.</p>	<p>Learning Targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to conduct short and comprehensive research projects in a PowerPoint project on their choice of Greek Deity or Hero.</li> <li>1. Students will demonstrate an ability to participate effectively in collaborative discussions by constructing their group presentations.</li> </ol>
<p>Pre-Requisite Knowledge and/or Skills:</p> <p>Students need to know how to write a critical analysis essay, and how to include specific and relevant information. They need to be able to use source material in an explication of a theme</p> <p>How I know the students have this:</p> <p>Students have just completed their first 5 paragraph essay on an analysis of character traits using the information found in a text as evidence, in which they explicated material from the source to answer a theme-based question: what makes (Temple Grandin or Coach Boone - <i>Temple Grandin &amp; Remember the Titans</i> - successful).</p>		
<p>Academic language that will be used in lesson:</p> <p>research citing/citation</p> <p>Strategies and opportunities for supporting academic language:</p> <p>one-pager form note-taking group-work</p>		
<p>Connections to students' "Funds of Knowledge"/assets, prior knowledge, and or/interdisciplinary connections that will be made during the lesson:</p> <p>Explain to students that as Freshman they are near the end of their long journey that began in Elementary school. Ithaca the ultimate goal for Odysseus (Ulysses) is no different from their desire to graduate; focusing on the journey is more important than the destination.</p>		

<p>This lesson is serving as a foundation for applying knowledge for students to engage in understanding the complex forces behind the Odyssey and the upcoming tasks in the unit.</p>		
<p>How have you addressed the needs of diverse learners? (Ex: IEPs, 504s, linguistic &amp; cultural diversity, students without prerequisite knowledge, etc.)</p> <p>To address student IEP needs, I have ensured that all forms and assignments are available both in a printed and online format.</p>		
<p>What technology supports or integration are included in this lesson?</p> <p>Students will be required to do research on their school-issued Chromebooks. Further, I will post all instructional material and assignments online in Google Classroom.</p>		
<p>Materials/Equipment/Supplies/Technology/Preparation:</p> <p>Chromebook/Computer TV/Projector Graphic Organizer</p>		
	<p><b>Procedure: TEACHER DOES...</b> <i>Include "look fors" and other ways you'll observe and check with students to be sure they are engaged in the learning.</i></p>	<p><b>Procedure: STUDENTS DO...</b> <i>Include evidence of student engagement that you'll include/watch for to monitor student learning</i></p>
<p>Time 15 mins</p>	<p>Motivation/Hook: Vocab video: introduce 7 new vocab words, using video with examples and definitions</p> <p>Walk students through analysis of each word in terms of part of speech.</p>	<p>Motivation/Hook:</p> <p>Students will take out a piece of paper, write down the new vocabulary terms, watch the video, and write down the definitions.</p>
<p>2 mins</p>	<p>Direct students to create 7 sentences using the new 7 vocab words.</p> <p>What are some "stories" we tell ourselves today?</p>	

20 mins	<p><b>Teaching</b> OR Group OR Independent Application:</p> <p>Begin the Greek Mythology Presentation Discuss the purpose behind mythology and the themes used within Greek Mythology.</p>	<p>Teaching OR Group OR <b>Independent Application:</b></p> <p>Students will use provided Cornell notes template to record and note-take important information</p>
8 mins	<p><b>Teaching</b> OR Group OR Independent Application:</p> <p>Introduce the god/goddess presentation project. Students will work in teams of 2, researching a specific god or goddess. Each group will lock in their choice of deity, remind groups to have 2-3 backup options they want to research. They will need to provide artwork and credible information</p> <p>Inform students that they will have the next 4 days to work on this project and will present by day 5.</p>	<p>Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:</p> <p>Students are paying attention as the Teacher relays the instructions. Student groups will choose a specific god (should have 2-3 backups in case the deity is already selected).</p>
45 mins	<p>Teaching OR Group OR <b>Independent</b> Application:</p> <p>Students are beginning their research, as they work, I am monitoring and checking in with individual groups to assess students on task and check-in for an understanding of the task.</p>	<p>Teaching OR Group OR <b>Independent Application:</b></p> <p>Students are working in groups of two after receiving their assigned god or goddess to research.</p> <p>Student groups should be working to complete a graphic organizer to store the information that they are researching for this stage of the project.</p>

5 mins	Closure: Ask students to share how their research is going; use a gauge for student understanding.	Closure:  groups share one initial finding in a short 10 sec summary to the teacher and class.  (i.e., Zeus was a philanderer)
<p><u>Key assessments and assignments</u> that provide evidence of student engagement and learning collected during/as a result of this lesson:  Vocabulary notes turned in after the first 15 min demonstrate student learning/engagement.  Teacher formative assessment from monitoring  Students will submit one-pager by the third day.</p>		
<p>Theoretical, Pedagogical, and/or Lines of Research that Justify Your Instructional Choices:</p> <p>Scaffolding/Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky)  Group Reading ( Gallagher &amp; Kittle, 2020;2022).  One-pager (Cult of Pedagogy, 2018).</p>		
<p><i>These reflection questions are provided to help you think about your lessons AFTER you have taught them. Please complete these questions after you've taught to help you with your instructional commentary, and then delete the reflections when you submit your lesson plans for you edTPA.</i></p>		
<p>Reflection:  Did all the students meet the learning target? How do you know?</p> <p>Learning target assessment will be collected on Friday, but some informal assessments near the end of the period revealed most of the student groups have not collected research to include as evidence, but many groups had found little "nuggets" of information that would be useful in their presentations.</p>		
<p>Reflection:  2. Describe any changes you made <u>as you were teaching</u> the lesson.</p> <p>I had made the opening action much longer due to getting derailed, therefore, I had modified the ending of the period (roughly 20 mins was devoted to the groups determining their research topic (deity of choice) and group members.  The THINK/PAIR/SHARE section of the lesson took much longer than 2 mins, I shifted it to around 8-10 mins due to</p>		

Reflection:

3. What would you change about this lesson plan before you teach it again? Pay attention to situations where students either did not learn or already knew.

Referring to my conference with my course Supervisor, I am planning to change this lesson with more explicit links to how Mythology is relevant today (Nike shoes - Nike, Goddess of Victory).

I will provide groupings for the next time this lesson is taught due to students ( I had meant to at the beginning but not all students were present).

Reflection:

4. How did the results of this lesson influence the way that you will teach in the future?

Students were successful in derailing my initial project plan and took longer for the opening vocabulary activity. In the future, I am going to adopt more natural consequences and not provide extra time for everyone to complete the activity.

**Lesson Plan**

**Teacher Candidate: Tim Pickle**

**Date of Lesson:**

**6/3/2022**

Lesson Title/Description: Reading of Act IV of Romeo and Juliet		
Lesson # 4 of 4	Time Allotted for this Lesson: ~60 (90) (Assembly day for weird schedule)	
Standards:  9-10.RL.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings  9-10.RL.10: By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with	Central Focus: Students will demonstrate their ability to read and comprehend literature with appropriate scaffolding for the high range of the grades 9-10 complexity band. Additionally, students will demonstrate their ability to determine the meaning of words and phrases including both figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.	Learning Targets: Students will demonstrate their ability to both read and comprehend literature for grades 9-10, specifically <i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i> , and demonstrate an ability to determine the meaning of words and phrases from both the reading and vocabulary quiz.



scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.		
<p>Prerequisite Knowledge and/or Skills: Students will need to have read the introduction slides for ACT IV of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> prior to class today. Furthermore, they need to have processed the information using a form of note-taking of pictures or written notes using an organizer.</p> <p>How I know the students have this: I spend one class period the day before guiding students through an understanding of the act which is read the following day. Students are tasked with completing a graphic note organizer using picture notes such as Comic Strip notes or may use written notes, which are submitted and evaluated for student understanding/comprehension.</p>		
<p>Academic language that will be used in lesson: Determine, Interpret, Analyze</p> <p>Strategies and opportunities for supporting academic language: Students will <b>determine</b> and <b>interpret</b> vocabulary words using a vocabulary quiz. Other opportunities are that students will be working on completing a One-Pager in which they are tasked with <b>analyzing</b> the balcony scene from ACT II Scene II of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>.</p>		
<p>Connections to students' "Funds of Knowledge"/assets, prior knowledge, and or/interdisciplinary connections that will be made during the lesson: The comic notes system that I use for student pre-reading is designed in such a way that they are reliant on interpreting the information into their own "knowledge." For example, one student explained the sleeping potion for Juliet by drawing a science beaker and liquid.</p>		
<p>How have you addressed the needs of diverse learners? (Ex: IEPs, 504s, linguistic &amp; cultural diversity, students without prerequisite knowledge, etc.) My IEP students have note-taking and writing directives that call for them to receive any notes for information in class as something done for them so that they can focus on the lesson material. That is why my introduction is always the day before we actually read the act, they then devote the time to incorporate the information as I explain it.</p>		
<p>What technology supports or integration are included in this lesson? Smart TV/ Projector Computer (Teacher) Google Forms (Quiz)</p>		

Materials/Equipment/Supplies/Technology/Preparation: Student Textbooks with <i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i> One-Pager directions/Templates Color Pencils/Pens/Markers		
	<b>Procedure: TEACHER DOES...</b> <i>Include "look fors" and other ways you'll observe and check with students to be sure they are engaged in the learning.</i>	<b>Procedure: STUDENTS DO...</b> <i>Include evidence of student engagement that you'll include/watch for to monitor student learning</i>
Time  15 mins	Motivation/Hook:  Vocab Quiz: Students will use their Chromebooks to take the quiz. <b>Taking Attendance for Class.</b> I am looking for students who don't have a Chromebook out and may need to be directed to get one from the library or reminded to get started.	Motivation/Hook:  Students take out their Chromebooks and log into the quiz and begin taking it. I am circulating to check for students on task.  Students will put away their Chromebooks and get out their textbooks after finishing the vocabulary quiz.
3 mins	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  <b>Review the Vocabulary Quiz results;</b> remind students that this is the last week of new vocabulary, but that they will be doing review exercises on Monday.	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  Students see how they did compared to their peers and where they have room for growth.
30 mins	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  Direct Students to open to the correct page in their book for the ACT IV  Prompt student reading/ reminding students to pick up the roles or	Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:  Students read the roles they have chosen to present the play to the class.  Students will read from their seats rather than standing in front of the classroom.

	<p>otherwise read when there is no one offering.</p> <p>Guide Discussion of key instances from the scene(s)</p>	
10-15 mins	<p>Teaching OR Group OR <b>Independent Application:</b></p> <p>Working on <b>One-Pager Assignment</b> Due at end of class (students will need to have access to the coloring pens, templates, and construction paper.</p> <p>If student behavior is good, I will play a “fun” movie that they can listen to as they work.</p>	<p>Teaching OR Group OR Independent Application:</p> <p>Students will work on their One-Pager for the Balcony Scene. They will have on their desk the piece of construction paper, template, and their rough draft and book to use as source material.</p>
	<p>Closure:</p> <p>Remind students to turn in their work, and check for learning by asking what is the plan between Friar Lawrence and Juliet at the end of Scene 1.</p>	<p>Closure:</p> <p>Students should answer the question by explaining that Juliet will take a potion that will mimic death.</p>
<p><u>Key assessments and assignments</u> that provide evidence of student engagement and learning collected during/as a result of this lesson: Students will submit a one-pager assignment today as evidence that students have been engaging in analysis from ACT II Scene 2. I will use formative assessment today in the form of having students read from the play, and circulating the room to confirm that everyone is engaged in the lesson. (Looking for one or two students in particular who are having trouble staying on task with the reading.</p>		

**Theoretical, Pedagogical, and/or Lines of Research that Justify Your Instructional Choices:**

I believe the best way to interact with a play is to read it aloud as much of the meaning and interaction is lost with silent reading. Additionally, the one-pager assignment that students will be completing today is an adaptation of analysis using a non-threatening approach in which students demonstrate an understanding of literature or scenes from literature without the dread of a 5 paragraph essay. Additionally, I know that my students are already hesitant to read so I have divided the reading with frontloading content to help support them in appreciating and understanding the content of the play.

*These reflection questions are provided to help you think about your lessons AFTER you have taught them. Please complete these questions after you've taught to help you with your instructional commentary, and then delete the reflections when you submit your lesson plans for you edTPA.*

**Reflection:**

Did all the students meet the learning target? How do you know?

**Reflection:**

2. Describe any changes you made as you were teaching the lesson.

**Reflection:**

3. What would you change about this lesson plan before you teach it again? Pay attention to situations where students either did not learn or already knew.

**Reflection:**

4. How did the results of this lesson influence the way that you will teach in the future?

## Appendix C

6/28/22, 12:33 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term I - Fall 2021 1/4

### **MAT ONLINE\HYBRID TERM I - FALL 2021**

#### **Student Name :**

Pickle, Timothy W

#### **PRE/OBSERVATION/POST MEETING DATES**

##### **Pre-Lesson Meeting\***

11/22/2021

##### **Post-Lesson Meeting\***

11/23/2021

### **LESSON PLANNING "LOOK FORs"**

#### **Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?**

Yes. These were given to Tim along with the unit of study. He's presenting sections 2 -5 out of 17. Tim has become better at staying focused on the goal - target. His note cards and slides are keeping him aimed at the target and preventing him from going off-topic. Tim has been doing a great job of refocusing himself on the lesson and the target.

#### **Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?**

Yes. Tim is following the unit plan for Wonder. He is advancing our writing unit while practicing comprehension skills. We are working to help Tim understand the full goal of the unit. At this time he's able to focus clearly on individual lessons. Our focus currently is on seeing how one lesson leads to another - how the information and knowledge builds throughout the unit of study AND throughout the year.

#### **Are a variety of appropriate formal and informal assessments used?**

Yes. Tim is checking in on students as they walk through the process. Students are completing worksheet #4. He's teaching them today about writing an evidence-based paragraph. Focus = using evidence and applying the EBW writing format: Claim, Premise, Intro to Evidence, Evidence, and Justification. The first half of the worksheet included comprehension questions (yesterday). Today is the writing portion - it's the first time Tim has taught paragraphing.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY "LOOK FORs"**

#### **Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?**

Yes. Tim has made slides for each step of the process. He is "using" note cards to help him stay focused. This was done better during the morning bloc's instruction. Reminders given during PM. The Intro to Evidence and Evidence needed more connection - perhaps an example sentence that includes both so they can see it? Two examples would be even better - each would have a different intro to illustrate your point about using an appropriate intro for your evidence.

#### **Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?** 6/28/22, 12:33 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term I - Fall 2021 2/4

Yes. We worked to make sure each step was scaffolded for individual students. Tim has the Bengals - the middle group. Sumatrans and Siberians are in other rooms working with other students. He is working with a group of 12 students. The other 19 students are working with aides or on an independent study project supported by Ms. Scruggs (me). Tim and I worked to set-up step-by-step instructions to help students through today's lesson. Tim made the slides and supported the 10 students in class on the implementation.

#### **Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

Siberians = basic comprehension and sentence writing  
Sumatrans = independent study - have completed the full book, writing their first essay  
Bengals (Tim's group) = comprehension and paragraphing - next steps = essay writing  
Bengals = comprehension questions and evidence-based paragraphs for this section  
Tim is working to use the words needed to communicate his expectations to students. We are focusing on "precision of language" as often the words and the intent do not match. Today has been a good day. The note cards have really helped with focus and clarity.

#### **Does the Candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?**

Yes. Tim is walking through how to add a document in Google Classroom, how to double-space writing, and how to submit an assignment in Google Classroom. The tech here is used as a tool rather than for engagement.

#### **Does the Candidate manage a safe and respectful learning environment?**

Yes. (The cussing (sucks) from this morning was eliminated. Tim interacts gently with individual students. He's very helpful to individual needs. Tim is doing a great job of answering individual questions. This is an area of growth for him as previously this flustered him. Today he's been terrific with his rotating around the room and being aware of where students are and

what's holding them up. His tone of voice has been helpful and friendly. Tim is challenged by tracking and staying aware of the other groups: Siberians and Sumatrans. The transition to send them away is smooth, but getting them back and tracking the time with them needs reminding every day.

### **ASSESSMENT "LOOK FORs"**

#### **Are assessments data driven?**

Yes. Comprehension questions and paragraphing with a scoring rubric. Tim now does a good job of figuring out what the focus is supposed to be and how to grade on that focus. We've had this focus in the past, and he's carrying the info forward.

#### **Do assessments align to standards?**

Yes, but I'm not clear on if Tim sees this yet. I'll talk through it again next week.

**Do informal and formal assessments give meaningful feedback to learners?** 6/28/22, 12:33 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term I - Fall 2021 3/4

Yes. Tim is helping students as he moves around the room. He's checking where they are in the process and working to solve problems in real time. Tim is responsible for grading the worksheets and paragraphs. We'll talk through that again today.

#### **Are there a variety of assessments that are developmentally appropriate and use both formative and summative data?**

Yes, but they are not all visible in this lesson. This lesson is focused on paragraphing.

### **TEACHING "LOOK FORs"**

#### **Do instructional choices stem from research and theory?**

Yes although Tim is not yet aware of them. This is an area for growth - knowing how they different parts of teaching impact learning, individuals, and community.

#### **Additional feedback for the Teacher Candidate.**

There's a lot of growth visible during this lesson. The note cards REALLY helped. The process for this was having one note card for each slide of the presentation. Tim is using the note cards like he would for a speech.

### **FOR BILINGUAL CLASSROOM TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY:**

**Bilingual Pedagogy: Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).**

N/A

## **PART II - GOALS**

**What are the next steps for the Teacher Candidate? Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.**

1. Tim will be knowledgeable about the goals of the unit of study and able to articulate how the lessons build toward those goals.
2. Tim will incorporate multiple strategies for classroom management and work up to full-class instruction.

## **PART III: STRENGTHS**

**Share one or two outstanding strengths of the Teacher Candidate.**

1. Tim did a great job addressing student needs. He anticipated what would cause challenges and was ready to help students overcome those hurdles.
2. Tim's note cards really helped him stay focused. He came in excited to teach and it showed. He was rehearsed and ready to go. Best day of teaching so far.

## **PART IV: CONCERNS**

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?\***

Yes

## **OBSERVATION UPLOAD**

*You can upload a copy of your observation form rather than type your information into TK20*

### **Observation Document Upload**

No file attached 6/28/22, 12:33 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term I - Fall 2021 4/4

6/28/22, 12:33 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term I - Fall 2021 1/3

## **MAT ONLINE/HYBRID TERM I - FALL 2021**

**Student Name :**

Pickle, Timothy W

## **LESSON PLANNING "LOOK FORs"**

**Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?**

Yes - students are writing a paragraph. This is posted on the classroom as students walk in and stated multiple times throughout the lesson.

**Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?**

Yes - today's standard focuses on using textual evidence to support an analysis of the text

**Are a variety of appropriate formal and informal assessments used?**

In the warmup, students wrote in their "write away" notebooks. They wrote a sentence using the verb "jostle" and then Tim had them share out. Formative assessment - Writing a paragraph with textual evidence from Wonder

**INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY "LOOK FORs"****Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?**

Procedures - "On your desks, you need to have out a closed Chromebook, Wonder, etc." - I love this form of directions. Make sure you give students enough time to retrieve their supplies, check to make sure everyone has followed instructions, and then give next directions. Overall, this is an improvement, too. Tim's directions are clear and reinforced by the slides on the board. Google Classroom instructions are exceptionally clear and the slide picture which shows students what to click on is great. Creating a blank document alongside them is great. I love this. This moves the lesson along at their pace. Paragraphing instructions are extremely clear - students are told what to do in each sentence

**Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?**

Yes Hook - individual work and then group shares out Transition - instructions given Paragraphing - teacher-led instruction to create document and start paragraph, then students are gradually released to work on their own

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?** 6/28/22, 12:33 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online VHybrid Term I - Fall 2021 2/3

Checks for understanding - yes. Differentiation - Students are divided into three leveled reading groups. Today, Tim worked with the "Bengals" to guide them through this paragraphing activity

**Does the Candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?**

Chromebooks Google Slides show

**Does the Candidate manage a safe and respectful learning environment?**

Tim is actively working on his classroom management skills. I can see evidence of Tim working on this from observation to observation. Tim is still working to find his management style and presence, but I see him trying different techniques and then analyzing their effectiveness at the end of the lesson.

**ASSESSMENT "LOOK FORs"****Are assessments data driven?**

Yes

**Do assessments align to standards?**

Yes - Students are writing paragraphs using textual evidence; the standard deals with using textual evidence to support an analysis

**Do informal and formal assessments give meaningful feedback to learners?**

Informal assessment - Warmup. The conversation that ensued was really great to emphasize the new knowledge Tim rotating around the classroom is another great way that feedback is being delivered to students

**Are there a variety of assessments that are developmentally appropriate and use both formative and summative data?**

Yes, informal and formative assessments are observed during this lesson

**TEACHING "LOOK FORs"****Do instructional choices stem from research and theory?**

Yes. Tim is delivering information in different modalities - students can see/read instructions on Google Classroom, they listen to Tim explain them. I do, we do, you do is apparent Wonder is being read aloud but students are accountable for the content. Lots of pauses to reinforce main ideas during the reading. Modeling used during writing instruction.

**Additional feedback for the Teacher Candidate.**

I see effort and improvement, which are both really good things. Keep working on building relationships with students. Get to know them, their interests, and then make an effort to have conversations with them as people (not just as students)

**FOR BILINGUAL CLASSROOM TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY:** 6/28/22, 12:33 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online VHybrid Term I - Fall 2021 3/3

**Bilingual Pedagogy: Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as, cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).**

## PART II - GOALS

**What are the next steps for the Teacher Candidate? Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.**

Keep working on classroom management. Try to find the age-appropriate management tools needed. The hand on head, finger on nose is a little young for this group, but you saved it by asking them to be a little silly with you today - you had more buy in when you talked to them like this. Continue making notecards for each slide and continue creating slideshow content - the more of this you do, the better. When last few students are finishing, make sure other students are given a task.

## PART III: STRENGTHS

**Share one or two outstanding strengths of the Teacher Candidate.**

Tim's energy today was noticeably improved. His voice was commanding and filled with excitement and emphasis. This is a change from the first observation and a huge improvement. During independent worktime, Tim paid lots of close attention to a number of students. Students were on task - 100% of the class. Tim's conversations with students were helpful and kind. When necessary, he pulled back to the whole class and clarified concepts to the whole class. He was both kind and positive. The students responded to this well.

## PART IV: CONCERNS

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?\***

Yes

6/28/22, 12:30 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term II - Winter 2022 1/3

## MAT ONLINE/HYBRID TERM II - WINTER 2022

**Student Name :**

Pickle, Timothy W

## PRE/POST/OBSERVATION DATES

**Pre lesson meeting\***

03/07/2022

**Post lesson meeting\***

03/08/2022

**Observation\***

03/07/2022

## LESSON PLANNING

**Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?**

Yes.

**Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?**

Yes

**Lesson is based on assessment data?**

More tools and data could be used when going into the planning for a lesson.

**Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?**

This is an emerging area. More scaffolding and support is needed for certain students.

**Lesson has an opening/hook?**

Yes.

## INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

**Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?**

Slower pacing sometimes makes it hard for students to follow. Too much background or explanation can also hinder the students from following and lead to distractions. Tim sometimes has a portion of the class following, but other students who are not which leads to kids not working or being unclear on instructions.

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

This is an emerging area. Tim is making the effort and improving, but classroom management issues are getting in the way of some of the learning that could happen. 6/28/22, 12:30 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term II - Winter 2022 2/3

**Does the candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?**

Yes. This is a strength.



**Does the candidate utilize research-based behavior management strategies to promote an optimal learning environment such as high engagement strategies, Grindler techniques, proactive procedures/routines, etc.**

Tim is emerging in this area and has improved, but definitely needs to increase his toolbox with 14 year olds.

**- Estimated times of instruction are planned.- Pacing of lesson was appropriate.- Candidate adjusted lesson closing appropriately (lesson ended early or ran over time limit)**

This is an area of struggle. Tim needs to work on reading the engagement of the class and exercising flexibility and adapting to the needs of students based on what he's seeing on the ground. Students are often able to derail him and throw him off task.

## ASSESSMENT

**Does the candidate provide meaningful feedback throughout the lesson, addressing tasks and/or assessment?**

Tim enjoys writing and has enthusiasm for the topic. HE tries to give students meaningful feedback. He needs to work on finding the balance between positive and constructive feedback and building positive relationships with students, so that the constructive criticism is more effective.

**The candidate's assessments are \_\_ aligned to a learning target \_\_ developmentally appropriate \_\_ of enough variety to allow students to show competence \_\_ formal \_\_ informal \_\_ formative \_\_ summative \_\_ other**

For the most part, yes. Some assessments should be shortened and targeted more narrowly to the learning goal as to keep students focused and involved.

## ANALYSIS OF TEACHING

**Candidate is able to discuss, provide evidence of, and can justify connections to educational research and/or theory?**

Yes. This is an area of strength for Tim.

**Candidate uses research and/or theory to explain their P-12 learner's progress?**

Tim just started his unit, so I will need to observe this more.

## FOR BILINGUAL TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY

**Bilingual Pedagogy: Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).**

N/A for this class.

## PART II - STRENGTHS AND GOALS

**Share what went well with the lesson and areas of strength.**

Tim is strong with technology and displays a love and passion for his topic. He is positive, professional, and makes an effort everyday. Tim is honest with students and always willing to help a student. He is also open to feedback and collaborates.

**What are the next steps for the teacher candidate. Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.** 6/28/22, 12:30 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term II - Winter 2022  
3/3

Tim and I have discussed pacing and strategies for using a 90 minute period--4th period--with Freshmen. This is a tall order. He needs to stay focused on the learning goal at hand, move learning along, and avoid distractions. We have also talked about building relationships through positive feedback and interactions with students.

## PART III - CONCERNS

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?\***

Yes

**Please describe any concerns you have.**

I think Tim will grow into a good teacher, but he is struggling with the classroom management piece in the early stages, especially with high energy boys. This is the area where we will continue to work throughout the semester.

## GRADE

**Grade:**

B-

6/28/22, 12:32 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term II - Winter 2022 1/3

## MAT ONLINE/VHYBRID TERM II - WINTER 2022

**Student Name :**

Pickle, Timothy W

## OBSERVATION DATE

### Observation\*

02/22/2022

## LESSON PLANNING

### Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?

Yes. Today, Tim's students are beginning to read *The Most Dangerous Game*, a very common freshmen English text.

### Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?

Yes. Tim has time to do a variety of things this period. First, he goes over vocab and parts of speech. Then, he introduces *The Most Dangerous Game*. He uses this opportunity to review conflict, plot, protagonist/antagonist,

### Lesson is based on assessment data?

Yes

### Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?

Yes - Tim planned a nice lesson. There were enough transitions to keep students interested and lots of video clips which also engaged them. I really like the way that the notes became interactive - Tim projected a pre-made slide on the board and filled it in during class discussion (which is the most dangerous, man or the wild?). Students were really engaged in this activity.

### Lesson has an opening/hook?

Vocab video - clever, I haven't seen this before. Students seem pretty receptive to it. Tim used this as a hook for the class and then spent a few minutes reviewing the video's content.

## INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

### Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?

Learning targets are implied but not explicitly stated/communicated. It's fairly easy to discern the objectives from the instruction, but I would still recommend that these be posted on the class board or verbally stated. After vocab, Tim said: Our agenda for today is: Vocab, cover the most dangerous game, so these directions were communicated clearly to students

### Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?

Yes, Tim shows the vocab video and then reviews understanding, taking this a step further. Students are asked what part of speech each word is. Students demonstrated a clear understanding of both definitions and parts of speech. Tim gave students some tips to track down adjectives (-ous). 6/28/22, 12:32 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term II - Winter 2022 2/3

### Does the candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?

Yes - class starts with seating chart projected on the board and then a vocab video that pairs vocab words with famous movie clips. *The Most Dangerous Game* trailer. Study materials posted on Google Classroom

### Does the candidate utilize research-based behavior management strategies to promote an optimal learning environment such as high engagement strategies, Granger techniques, proactive procedures/routines, etc.

A seating chart is a great way to manage behavior. Tim wears a microphone to help his students hear him. "Waiting for 100% please" - waited until everyone has books open, phones away, voices off. This was great.

### - Estimated times of instruction are planned.- Pacing of lesson was appropriate.- Candidate adjusted lesson closing appropriately (lesson ended early or ran over time limit)

1 min - seating chart 10 min - vocab video and discussion 5 min - transition (turn in papers, get textbooks opened) and introduce *The Most Dangerous Game*

## ASSESSMENT

### Does the candidate provide meaningful feedback throughout the lesson, addressing tasks and/or assessment?

Yes. Tim knows students' names (which I commend him for) and leads a great discussion about man vs. nature that students are engaged in.

### The candidate's assessments are \_\_\_ aligned to a learning target \_\_\_ developmentally appropriate \_\_\_ of enough variety to allow students to show competence \_\_\_ formal \_\_\_ informal \_\_\_ formative \_\_\_ summative \_\_\_ other

Aligned to a learning target - Yes Developmentally appropriate - Yes Assessment is both informal (class discussion) and formative

## ANALYSIS OF TEACHING

### Candidate is able to discuss, provide evidence of, and can justify connections to educational research and/or theory?

Yes, very much so. Before class began, Tim talked about the grammar article we read in pedagogy and referred to some readings from a class taught by Cornelia Paraskevas in an earlier term.

### Candidate uses research and/or theory to explain their P-12 learner's progress?

Yes

## FOR BILINGUAL TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY

**Bilingual Pedagogy:** Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as, cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).

## **PART II - STRENGTHS AND GOALS**

Share what went well with the lesson and areas of strength. 6/28/22, 12:32 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term II - Winter 2022 3/3

Tim was well-prepared for this lesson (seating chart, lesson plan, videos cued up and ready to go, etc.) Tim is great at incorporating technology into his classroom

**What are the next steps for the teacher candidate. Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.**

At the beginning of the period, I strongly recommend that you wait until everyone is quiet and listening and then give directions. While the video did quiet students down and this seems to be a regular routine, some students were still asking questions like "what are we supposed to write down?" Anticipate these questions and make sure you give clear directions. Pair transitions - when students turn in vocab, have them grab their books

## **PART III - CONCERNS**

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?\***

No

**Please describe any concerns you have.**

## **GRADE**

**Grade:**

6/28/22, 12:31 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term II - Winter 2022 1/3

## **MAT ONLINE\HYBRID TERM II - WINTER 2022**

**Student Name :**

Pickle, Timothy W

## **PRE/POST/OBSERVATION DATES**

**Pre lesson meeting\***

03/09/2022

**Post lesson meeting\***

03/10/2022

**Observation\***

03/09/2022

## **LESSON PLANNING**

**Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?**

Yes. project-Rubric

**Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?**

Yes.

**Lesson is based on assessment data?**

This assignment is the first tested in this skill and will provide baseline data.

**Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?**

More support needed for students with citations Examples would be helpful so students can see what they'll be expected to produce The assignment is broken into steps, but students need some help focusing on the steps they need to focus on in the moment. Notes are not appropriate for all students and in some cases do not align with IEP without accommodations like highlighting

**Lesson has an opening/hook?**

Today, started with a quiz.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY**

**Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?**

There's room for improvement in this area. Consider using google classroom to break down academic expectations into steps. Let them know what they are expected to produce at the end of 20 minutes, 30 minutes, 50 minutes. A big project is

often a little overwhelming making it difficult for kids to be as productive. 6/28/22, 12:31 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term II - Winter 2022 2/3

It was great that you reviewed the rubric, but classroom management and distractions did make it difficult to focus in. Examples to look at would be helpful as students set down to work. After giving students a large assignment, it might be wise to give them think time for a night before having them set to work so they can choose their topic in advance and come into work time more prepared.

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

This has been difficult when students are not focused, disruptive, or trying to get the teacher off task. Mr. Pickle is making these efforts to check in for understanding, but not all learners are benefiting.

**Does the candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?**

Mr. Pickle is doing great in this area. He did a nice job with Google Classroom and incorporating media.

**Does the candidate utilize research-based behavior management strategies to promote an optimal learning environment such as high engagement strategies, Grindler techniques, proactive procedures/routines, etc.**

Efforts are being made to use high engagement strategies, but implementation is not quite there yet. An area for improvement is setting up expectations daily for work time, note time, collaboration time, etc until they become routine. When students are on task and doing a great job, more can be done to affirm and support students in positive behavior.

**- Estimated times of instruction are planned.- Pacing of lesson was appropriate.- Candidate adjusted lesson closing appropriately (lesson ended early or ran over time limit)**

Some activities are going on for too long. Allowing for natural consequences instead of waiting for every student to finish a practice quiz for example will help the class move to the next activity, increase engagement and interest, and also teach students that they need to use their class time effectively or else the class will move on.

**ASSESSMENT**

**Does the candidate provide meaningful feedback throughout the lesson, addressing tasks and/or assessment?**

Yes. Mr. Pickle is doing a nice job with the content and is showing improvement in providing positive feedback when students contribute in class and when turning in work.

**The candidate's assessments are \_\_ aligned to a learning target \_\_ developmentally appropriate \_\_ of enough variety to allow students to show competence \_\_ formal \_\_ informal \_\_ formative \_\_ summative \_\_ other**

**ANALYSIS OF TEACHING**

**Candidate is able to discuss, provide evidence of, and can justify connections to educational research and/or theory?**

He is doing well in this area, but needs to work on finding the piece of why students should care. How does it apply to the student's experience directly.

**Candidate uses research and/or theory to explain their P-12 learner's progress?**

Mr. Pickle is doing well in this area.

**FOR BILINGUAL TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY**

**Bilingual Pedagogy: Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).**

**PART II - STRENGTHS AND GOALS** 6/28/22, 12:31 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online/VHybrid Term II - Winter 2022 3/3

**Share what went well with the lesson and areas of strength.**

Mr. Pickle planned a good lesson that was better paced than past lessons. There were breaks and transitions and the pacing was improved. When students weren't using class time effectively, he shortened work time and moved to the next activity. His engagement with students is more positive and he is beginning to build positive relationships with students.

**What are the next steps for the teacher candidate. Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.**

Cut down on teacher led activities and moved into more activities that require the students to be active learners. Improve pacing and shut down student attempts to derail learning. When giving students larger chunks of time to work on a project, set up expectations for the work environment and give students attainable daily goals, Check in with students on their progress and ask them to discuss what they have learned.

**PART III - CONCERNS**

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?\***

Yes

**Please describe any concerns you have.**

I am a little concerned about classroom management, but Mr. Pickle is growing and building his toolbox. There are challenges with a 90 minute period.

## GRADE

Grade:

B-

6/28/22, 12:32 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term II - Winter 2022 1/3

## MAT ONLINE/HYBRID TERM II - WINTER 2022

Student Name :

Pickle, Timothy W

## OBSERVATION DATE

Observation\*

03/07/2022

## LESSON PLANNING

**Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?**

Yes, Tim's lesson plans have clear learning targets that are aimed at teaching the standards. They are also generally measurable, too.

**Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?**

Yes

**Lesson is based on assessment data?**

Yes, Tim has been in this classroom for a number of weeks and uses his prior knowledge of students as well as their recent assignment scores to design his assignments and assessments

**Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?**

Yes

**Lesson has an opening/hook?**

The vocab activity on Monday serves as an introduction. Odyssey introduction - Tim did a great job here explaining that Greek mythology is still relevant today (but I'd love to see some examples of exactly how this is the case). Think-pair-share: What are stories we tell ourselves today or in the past?

## INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

**Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?**

I really like "It's important to remember that mythology was once religion." I like to tell students that these are "sacred stories." This was a nice overview of the importance of stories in our world today. When Tim is delivering a lesson that he has prepared materials for, his delivery and instructions are strong. Explanations are not quite as clear when specifically telling students to complete a task or when guiding a discussion. Tim's passion for his subject comes through strongly. "Right now, I want you to get into groups of two" (recommended that Tim gives directions before releasing students to get into groups. Also recommended that Tim control the groupings because students have proven themselves not particularly adept at selecting the best partners to work with). 6/28/22, 12:32 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Field Experience MAT Online\Hybrid Term II - Winter 2022 2/3

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

Yes, class proceeds like a Q&A, Tim introduces an activity and then allows students to informally ask questions about it. Students are invited to share examples during think-pair-share

**Does the candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?**

Yes, this is one of Tim's strengths. Today's lesson involves document camera and project, microphone, vocab video,

**Does the candidate utilize research-based behavior management strategies to promote an optimal learning environment such as high engagement strategies, Grinders techniques, proactive procedures/routines, etc.**

This class has some personalities who really feed off each other and they are being pretty disrespectful. Tim is working to address these disruptions one at a time, but may need to consider some unilateral or more direct action - while he's addressing one issue, another student takes up the mantle and causes another disruption. A timer for a task might be helpful - students are working hard to derail the class period by prolonging the vocab portion of the period. Good job making student

move, but I want Tim to note where he moved to. Tim moved him a second time and to the front - good! It's okay to stop answering the same questions when students are asking them to just be distracting

**- Estimated times of instruction are planned.- Pacing of lesson was appropriate.- Candidate adjusted lesson closing appropriately (lesson ended early or ran over time limit)**

Vocab - 10 minutes but ended up taking 30  
Greek mythology presentation intro  
Think-pair-share  
Greek mythology presentation slides and assignment explanation  
For assignments of Greek gods/goddesses, think about giving students a chance to talk about who they want in groups and go over each deity quickly so they have some idea what they are signing up for

## **ASSESSMENT**

**Does the candidate provide meaningful feedback throughout the lesson, addressing tasks and/or assessment?**

While leading a discussion about stories we grew up with, Tim is very affirming to the students who volunteer their answers. This was a very teacher-focused lesson so most feedback came in the form of Tim answering the students' questions.

**The candidate's assessments are\_\_ aligned to a learning target\_\_ developmentally appropriate\_\_ of enough variety to allow students to show competence\_\_ formal\_\_ informal\_\_ formative\_\_ summative\_\_ other**

Yes - aligned to a learning target and developmentally appropriate  
Formative - vocab sentences  
Summative - work was assigned but not collected (Greek deity group presentation)  
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## **ANALYSIS OF TEACHING**

**Candidate is able to discuss, provide evidence of, and can justify connections to educational research and/or theory?**

Yes, Tim has clearly engaged with his theoretical learning from WOU. He has a copy of 180 Days in the Classroom with him for reference. During discussions, Tim regularly discusses theory that has resonated with him.

**Candidate uses research and/or theory to explain their P-12 learner's progress?**

This is emerging and is an area I'd like to see Tim work on for next week

## **FOR BILINGUAL TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY**

**Bilingual Pedagogy: Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).**

## **PART II - STRENGTHS AND GOALS**

**Share what went well with the lesson and areas of strength.**

Students listened carefully to Tim going over the assignment rubric. Tim went over the rubric in-depth with students and they asked lots of questions. A model of the presentation would be an extension recommendation I'd share with Tim. The presentation assignment is well-designed

**What are the next steps for the teacher candidate. Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.**

Recommendations:- Two students at the back of the class probably shouldn't be seated together.- Make sure that all students are 100% quiet when you are giving directions- Consider projecting directions on the board when you've assigned students a task to work on so that students who might have spaced out can tune back in- When going over a project description, consider having students highlight or underline instructions as you go over things to ensure that they are paying attention- During work time, it can be hard to divide your attention between answering individual questions and watching the class, but this is also when behavior problems can come to a head, so you'll want to practice this

## **PART III - CONCERNS**

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?\***

No

**Please describe any concerns you have.**

## **GRADE**

**Grade:**

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## **MAT TERM III FIELD EXPERIENCE BINDER**

**Student Name :**

Pickle, Timothy W

## OBSERVATION DATE

### Observation\*

05/06/2022

## LESSON PLANNING

### Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?

Standards:

**9-10. RL.4: Determine** the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative ...

**9-10.W.3d:** Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to **convey a vivid** picture of the **experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.**

Learning Targets:- Students will be able to **determine** figurative language from reading a variety of texts.

-Students will also be able to use the figurative language to craftwriting relating vivid **descriptions or experiences** as appropriate.

### Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?

Yes today Tim's teaching was in alignment with the standards and targets identified in his lesson plan

### Lesson is based on assessment data?

Tim's lesson plan indicates this:

The last four days have been spent engaging students in aspects of analysis, attainment of literary terms, and responding to sensory images or experiences. He knows what his students have learned already and this lesson on symbolism builds on previous learning experiences

### Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?

Tim starts class today with a vocab quiz, then he goes over preliminary scores and tells students they have another chance to take the quiz if they want a chance to gain more points. Then, he goes over what the agenda is for the day and draws student attention to the board, where the agenda is written. Next, Tim passed out a graphic organizer and had a quick discussion with students about the purpose behind the organizer. One student said "I actually like those things," and Tim prompted him to explain why. This was a space in which Tim was able to help students understand why he is teaching what he is teaching. This was a good moment in the lesson. The graphic organizer related to the concept of symbolism. He played a shoe commercial with symbolism, then students talked in table groups about how the commercial demonstrated symbolism.

**Lesson has an opening/hook?** 6/28/22, 12:29 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Home MAT Term III Field Experience Binder 2/4

No, the lesson begins with a quiz I think Tim's lessons would benefit from a hook that Tim designs.

## INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

### Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?

Today they are. This has been an area of weakness for Tim, and I do see him working hard to apply feedback he's been given about making sure his instructions are clear. Today, he gives instructions and projects them on the board, then he rotates among the students and makes sure everyone is on task. During the food activity, I think Tim learned quickly that food creates a frenzy among students. He would have done better to explain the activity first, then pass out food with the explicit instruction to NOT touch the food yet.

### Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?

During work time, both Tim and his CT work together to make sure students are on-task and understanding the learning. Tim checks in with each table group and has chatty conversations with each group. The students seem responsive to his efforts. Students seem open to Tim's efforts at rebuilding relationships. Students are deeply enthusiastic about the food activity

### Does the candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?

This is something Tim does very well. His quiz is a Google form, he makes good use of the smart TV, he plays music sometimes, he uses a clicker so that he can move around the room while talking. Tim shows several video clips that students are highly engaged in.

### Does the candidate utilize research-based behavior management strategies to promote an optimal learning environment such as high engagement strategies, Grinder techniques, proactive procedures/routines, etc.

I see Tim trying to get better in this area, but this is an area of weakness for Tim. I see him making an effort to get the class quiet when one student is talking, and sometimes he enforces this, but that's sporadic. Today, Tim is projecting a positive attitude. I would describe his demeanor as "solicitous." He's encountered some deep resistance from students and many of his relationships with them have broken down. He's working hard to repair those relationships. One thing his CT reports is that Tim can be negative or demeaning to students. Today, he is clearly working hard to check this tendency and respond

more positively. He has a surprise prepared for students (which I imagine is a treat) and he also gives positive reinforcement (That was a great answer!) when students volunteer to talk. Tim sent a student into the courtyard after a warning, she took a break and then came back inside. Tim calls for attention with "I'm waiting for 100%." Students responded.

**- Estimated times of instruction are planned.- Pacing of lesson was appropriate.- Candidate adjusted lesson closing appropriately (lesson ended early or ran over time limit)**6/28/22, 12:29 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Home MAT Term III Field Experience Binder 3/4

Lesson pacing was appropriate. This is another area in which I know Tim is working to improve. 10 minutes for quiz 30 minutes for symbolism graphic organizer 30 minutes food activity to help students with descriptive writing

## ASSESSMENT

**Does the candidate provide meaningful feedback throughout the lesson, addressing tasks and/or assessment?**

Yes. Tim offers lots of verbal feedback to students throughout the lesson. His feedback is positive and helpful.

**The candidate's assessments are\_\_ aligned to a learning target\_\_ developmentally appropriate\_\_ of enough variety to allow students to show competence\_\_ formal\_\_ informal\_\_ formative\_\_ summative\_\_ other**

The graphic organizer is very helpful for reviewing symbolism. The food tasting/descriptive writing activity is an informal assessment but it's well-received and I am seeing Tim's efforts toward restoring a relationship with students. I believe Tim is getting a good look at the fact that a highly engaging lesson is the best classroom management.

## ANALYSIS OF TEACHING

**Candidate is able to discuss, provide evidence of, and can justify connections to educational research and/or theory?**

Tim writes this in his lesson plan:

I know that gamification of learning such as Kahoots and Blooket enables students to engage in learning without feeling like it is a task or chore. Kinesthetic learning and opportunities to self-choose in how they complete a task are contributors to student engagement in learning. Several times during his lesson, Tim referenced things he's learned in his program at WOU and explained to students why he is teaching them the way he is.

**Candidate uses research and/or theory to explain their P-12 learner's progress?**

This is not yet something I am seeing in Tim's instructional practice.

## FOR BILINGUAL TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY

**Bilingual Pedagogy: Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).**

## PART II - STRENGTHS AND GOALS

**Share what went well with the lesson and areas of strength.**

This was a high-quality restorative lesson for Tim. He worked closely with his CT to design a high-interest, engaging lesson.

Tim was working hard to improve in the area of classroom management and in being positive.

**What are the next steps for the teacher candidate. Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.**

## PART III - CONCERNS

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?**6/28/22, 12:29 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Home MAT Term III Field Experience Binder 4/4

Yes

**Please describe any concerns you have.**

## GRADE

**Grade:**

6/28/22, 12:30 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Home MAT Term III Field Experience Binder 1/4

## MAT TERM III FIELD EXPERIENCE BINDER

**Student Name :**

Pickle, Timothy W



**OBSERVATION DATE****Observation\***

06/03/2022

**LESSON PLANNING****Are goals and objectives, standards, or targets appropriate and measurable?**

9-10.RL.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings  
 9-10.RL.10: By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.  
 Learning Targets: Students will demonstrate their ability to both read and comprehend literature for grades 9-10, specifically Romeo & Juliet, and demonstrate an ability to determine the meaning of words and phrases from both the reading and vocabulary

**QUIZ** Tim has demonstrated growth in creating learning targets that are measurable and tied to standards.

**Do lesson plans align to objectives, standards, or targets?**

Vocabulary on vocab test comes from the play, so there is cohesion between the learning target and the work being done  
 Students listen to Romeo and Juliet Act 4; Tim stops the recording frequently to ask questions  
 6/28/22, 12:30 PM Tk20 by  
 Watermark | Home MAT Term III Field Experience Binder 2/4

The lesson plan is aligned to standard and learning target

**Lesson is based on assessment data?**

Yes. Tim writes the following in his lesson plan: "I spend one class period the day before guiding students through an understanding of the act which is read the following day. Students are tasked with completing a graphic note organizer using picture notes such as Comic Strip notes or may use written notes, which are submitted and evaluated for student understanding/comprehension."

**Are lessons sequenced and scaffolded appropriately?**

This is still an area where Tim could improve. Today's lesson did contain several transitions, yet, I am afraid that students were not engaged and not understanding the play. Certainly, reading and teaching Shakespeare is a difficult task for both teachers and students, and Tim is working his way through the challenges of this task. I think students would benefit from more guided reading - Tim is working on figuring out how often he needs to stop the recording to check for understanding. With Shakespeare, this is every two or three minutes, and while Tim initially stops the recording a few times at the beginning of the act, he then lets it play for about ten minutes before asking students what is happening.

**Lesson has an opening/hook?**

No, no hook is observed today. Students moved right into a vocab test.

**INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY****Are learning targets, directions, and procedures communicated appropriately to students?**

Instructions per individual activity are communicated clearly; however, there could be more clarity offered at the beginning of the period. On the board, students can see the sequence of events in the class: "Who or what is responsible for Romeo and Juliet's deaths?" I like that students can see what's approaching.

**Are checks for understanding and differentiation used to meet the needs of all learners?**

I did not observe much differentiation in this lesson. Tim explains in his lesson plan that students on IEPs are provided with notes so that they can focus on the lesson rather than writing notes.

**Does the candidate integrate technology and/or digital tools to engage learners?**

Yes, I regularly see Tim incorporate technology in his classroom. Today, he used the projector and smartboard as well as played a recording of Act 4 of Romeo and Juliet.

**Does the candidate utilize research-based behavior management strategies to promote an optimal learning environment such as high engagement strategies, Grindler techniques, proactive procedures/routines, etc.**

Tim is working hard on classroom management, but this is a place where he still needs to grow into his own style as a teacher. Students are constantly testing Tim with low-grade disruptions: on phones, earbuds in ears, giggles and glances across the room. Tim catches and corrects as many of these as he can, but he is forced to spend a lot of time dealing with these small fires. It 6/28/22, 12:30 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Home MAT Term III Field Experience Binder 3/4

distracts from the learning that students are trying to do. Today's lesson is an example of one in which students need to be more engaged so they are less disruptive.

**- Estimated times of instruction are planned.- Pacing of lesson was appropriate.- Candidate adjusted lesson closing appropriately (lesson ended early or ran over time limit)**

10 min - vocab 25 min - Listening to Act 4

## ASSESSMENT

**Does the candidate provide meaningful feedback throughout the lesson, addressing tasks and/or assessment?**

Tim's feedback today takes the form of classroom management. He interacts with the students but is usually issuing corrections by asking students to remain on task. When students answer questions correctly, Tim does give them positive reinforcement.

**The candidate's assessments are \_\_ aligned to a learning target \_\_ developmentally appropriate \_\_ of enough variety to allow students to show competence \_\_ formal \_\_ informal \_\_ formative \_\_ summative \_\_ other**

There is no assessment that takes place while students are listening to the play. This is, I think, a misstep. Students would do better if they had a task to focus on (even if it's guided reading questions). After the act is finished, students work on their one-pager which is a good piece of formative assessment.

## ANALYSIS OF TEACHING

**Candidate is able to discuss, provide evidence of, and can justify connections to educational research and/or theory?**

Tim does not provide any research-based justifications for today's planning in his lesson plan

**Candidate uses research and/or theory to explain their P-12 learner's progress?**

Tim does not provide any research-based justifications for his students' progress.

## FOR BILINGUAL TEACHER CANDIDATES ONLY

**Bilingual Pedagogy: Do lesson plans and instructional practices include bilingual strategies to support emergent bilinguals in content area comprehension and language development (ie: cross-linguistic and/or translanguaging strategies, such as, cognates, idioms, bilingual labels, word study, syntax transfer etc).**

## PART II - STRENGTHS AND GOALS

**Share what went well with the lesson and areas of strength.**

Tim has built positive relationships with many of his students and this is encouraging. This was a goal from Tim's midterm work and I'm happy to see improvement in this area.

**What are the next steps for the teacher candidate. Establish one or two specific and observable goals for the next scheduled observation.**

One thing I would like to suggest to Tim is that he continue to place himself in his students' shoes. Tim's expectations of his students are often higher than is appropriate. His expectations are more akin to what would be expected in a community college English class. High school freshmen need more engagement and help beyond just having R&J read aloud to them. They simply do not understand what is happening in the play, and I worry that Tim doesn't know they don't know what is happening in the play.

## PART III - CONCERNS 6/28/22, 12:30 PM Tk20 by Watermark | Home MAT Term III Field Experience Binder 4/4

**Are there any concerns that should be addressed at this time?\***

Yes

**Please describe any concerns you have.**

Tim has three areas of concern: 1. He is not timely in terms of communication or deadline. For example, Tim was supposed to provide his lesson plan to me five days prior to today's observation but I did not receive his lesson plan until late last night. 2. Tim needs to improve his classroom management skills. 3. Tim needs to work on his lesson plan pacing.

## GRADE

Grade: