

Section 1: Learning Context

Instructional Implications of the Community

District Name: ALDINE ISD

Campus Name: ALDINE MIDDLE

Campus #: 101902041

2008 Accountability Rating: Academically Acceptable

Gold Performance Acknowledgments:

Commended on Social Studies

Comparable Improvement: Reading/ELA & Mathematics

The community surrounding Aldine Middle School is a suburban, large territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with a population of 250,000 or more. Aldine Middle School is a title one school where the majority of the students are from the Greens point Area. The community is a minority area with 60.8% of Hispanic origin, 32.2% of African Americans, and 4.8% white origin. The socioeconomic profile has a median income of \$32,437. The average household size is 3.47 with 44.6% of households with kids and 55.4% of households without kids. The community surrounding Aldine Middle School contains striving immigrant families. These immigrant families are lower income suburban families who are struggling with a tight budget and work in service or skill- based jobs. These families usually have a high school education and lower. The community around Aldine Middle School also contains multi-lingual suburbanites. The multi-lingual community represents the middle class suburban individuals who speak a

foreign language. The education varies from high school to college with some earning graduate degrees. Some of these multi-lingual suburban communities own their homes. The relationship status of the community is 25.1% are single, 4.9% widow, 9.3% divorced, and 60.7 % are married. The political climate of the community is majority democratic. The community is very supportive to Aldine Independent School District because there are several vendors that support the district. This will affect my teaching because the support of the vendors involves the community.

Instructional Implications of the School

The physical appearance of Aldine Middle is older looking on the outside of the building but has a modern look on the inside of the building. There is a total of 894 students, 63.9 teachers, 10 personnel support staff, and 4 administrators. The teacher to student ratio is 13.3. The student percentage is 67.4% is Hispanic, 27.9% is African American, 4.4% is white, 0.1% is Native American, and 0.2% is Asian /Pacific Islanders. From these percentages 88.6% are economically disadvantaged, 15.3% have a limited English proficiency, 53.8% are at- risk. The teacher percentage is 43.7% African American, 3.1% is Hispanic, and 53.2% are white. According to experience 7.7% are beginning teachers, 34.3% have one to five years of experience, 14.1% have 6- 10 years of experience, 21.9% have 11-20 years of experience, and 21.9% have over 20 years of experience. Aldine Middle School has many media and educational resources such as a computer lab, library, teacher resource room, enrichment activities, sports, and many other extracurricular activities. These resources provided by the school will definitely affect my teaching and student learning in a positive way during the unit of instruction. The media support would allow me to become familiar with using technology in the

classroom such as using the elmo, computers, etc. The media support would also help me teach with the use of technology instead of writing on the board I could use PowerPoint, internet, etc to teach different lessons. The teacher resource room would be beneficial to me by providing materials for the classroom such as construction paper, glue, scissors, etc when planning hands on activities.

Instructional Implications of the Classroom

The classroom is located in the last hallway of the school which is the 400 hallway. The size of the classroom is very large and has a room temperature that is very cold. The lighting in the room is very bright, especially since there are windows located inside the classroom. The walls in the classroom contain colorful graphics all over the room such as bulletin boards identifying goals for the classroom, data, word wall, the theme of the school which is “everyone counts”, and the district’s mission statement, etc. The classroom also provides resources for the students such as a computer station, an elmo, dry erase boards, word wall, and a library. The rules for the classroom are be respectful, be on time, be prepared, and follow all school rules. The routines of the classroom are that students enter into the classroom quietly seating in their seats reading the assigned class novels for silent reading. Before the students arrive for class their novels and literacy notebooks are already placed on their desks. As soon as the bell rings silent reading begins with classical musical playing such as Mozart. Silent reading lasts for about 20 minutes while the students are reading silently I take attendance and handle any other paperwork. After silent reading the students spend at least five minutes writing a summary on what they have read in their literacy notebooks. The next routine is to do a read aloud of a book entitled The Diary of Latoya Hunter. While doing the read aloud of

Latoya Hunter we have class discussions making real-life text connections with the journal entries of Latoya Hunter. Students must raise their hands for permission to respond during class discussions and to leave the classroom if needed. The consequences of the rules are first a warning, second a code of conduct such as D- hall, third a student-teacher conference, fourth a teacher-parent conference, and fifth an office referral. The group practices are that when students are working in groups everyone must participate and have a role. If the students are not on task while working in groups then they will be moved from their groups and work independently on the assignment or work on another assignment that is similar to the group assignment. These classroom management practices will be beneficial to me because I will learn proper classroom management skills and I will be able to use these in my own classroom.

Instructional Implications of the Classroom Teacher and Teacher Candidate

My mentoring teacher, Ms. Brown is a female who is African American with 13 years of teaching experience. Ms. Brown classroom management skills demonstrate that she is very structured as well as flexible. Her characteristics toward her students demonstrate that she is very firm but also shows compassion for her students by setting expectations and standards for students to follow. This benefits the students because it shows they are able to set goals, time management skills, and shows self-discipline for completing assignments. Ms. Brown pushes her students to think outside the box and go above and beyond which incorporates Bloom's Taxonomy of Higher Order Thinking Skills. The genders in the classroom are 11 females and 7 males. The ethnicity is 15 students are Hispanic, 2 students African American, and 1 student is Caucasian. The approximate ages are 12-13. The teaching styles Ms. Brown demonstrates are direct

instruction, cooperative groupings, hands on activities, and oral language activities. These characteristics from Ms. Brown will have a great impact on me by showing me how effective different teaching styles work as well as how to encourage and motivate my students.

Instructional Implications of the Students

There are eighteen students in my 8th grade Language Arts classroom with 11 females and 7 males. The student's cultures are African American origin, Hispanic origin, and white origin. The majority of the student's primary language is Spanish first and English second. The musical interests of the students are tejano music, hip hop music, pop- rock, and alternative rock. Some of the televisions networks the students watch are WWF smack down, MTV television, BET television, and the KXLN Spanish station. The student's prior knowledge for this unit of instruction is understanding character traits, main idea, inferences, and story elements.

Literary Support

One context characteristic that might affect the students learning is rearranging the classroom for this unit. When providing the pre- assessment of the group project the desk had to be in groups of four to five. The grouping of desks allows the students to cooperate effectively with their group members. Arranging the desk separately would cause the students to easily get distracted. In each group the tables were labeled with a group number, roles for each group member, and rules for the group members to follow.

(Student Teaching and Field Experience Textbook)

In The Classroom



Section 2: Learning Goals and Objectives

Appropriate Learning Goal

The overall learning goal for the students is to identify and analyze the plot components of a plot pyramid. The students will be able to review the characteristics of plot structure. Students will also be able to work in whole class, cooperative groups, and individually. The students will also be able to demonstrate an understanding of plot structure by analyzing several short stories. The students will also use Plot Diagram interactive as a prewriting activity for essay tracing a plot structure in short stories. This goal is appropriate in terms of the students learning level because these students know the prior background knowledge in order to understand plot structure which includes being able to identify the main idea, sequence, and character analysis well as understanding sequencing of the story.

Multiple Objectives Lead to the Goal

This goal addresses the components of the writing process, character analysis, main idea, and sequencing. One reason why these objectives are appropriate for the students is because they must be able to improve their writing skills. The writing process will allow the students to become familiar with each stage of the writing process so they will become better writers. This goal also prepares eight grade students for the high school writing level which is at a higher standard. Another reason why the objective of the analysis of the characters is significant is because it allows the students to be able to make real life text connections with the characters as well as make inferences. The final objective of the main idea and details are important because this improves the students reading comprehension skills.

Objectives Match Learner Context

The objectives of this unit are appropriate for the classroom and the students. These objectives demonstrate the visual learning styles of many of the students which are visual, auditory, and the tactile learners. The students will be able to master the objectives because they high achievement levels that are expected of them from me and my cooperating teacher Ms. Brown. The classroom settings demonstrate progress for the students. For example, inside the classroom there is a word wall which allows the students to increase their vocabulary knowledge. This unit is appropriate for the community because the language arts department invites students, parents, and community leaders to a literacy night hosted by the language arts department. During literacy night the language arts teachers explain to the parents and the community things going on in the classroom academically.

Objectives Suggest Multiple Learning Activities

The overall outcome of this unit is for students to be able to identify and analyze plot structure. Prior to accomplishing the overall outcome there are activities designed to help students attain this outcome. One interesting activity of this unit was allowing the students to work in groups to determine the plot components by reading children books. The students were given markers and construction paper to draw a plot pyramid and label the plot components. The students were allowed to decorate their plot pyramids. This activity was interesting to the students because they are very creative and enjoy coloring and drawing. I also picked out children books that were interesting to the students such as Sponge Bob, Arthur, etc. Another activity of this unit was allowing the students to create their own original children books. This activity allowed the students who love to write to

be exposed to creative writing from a child's point of view using their imaginations. This activity also allowed the artists in the classroom to draw pictures and decorate their children books. In other words, my students are very creative with writing, drawing, painting, etc.

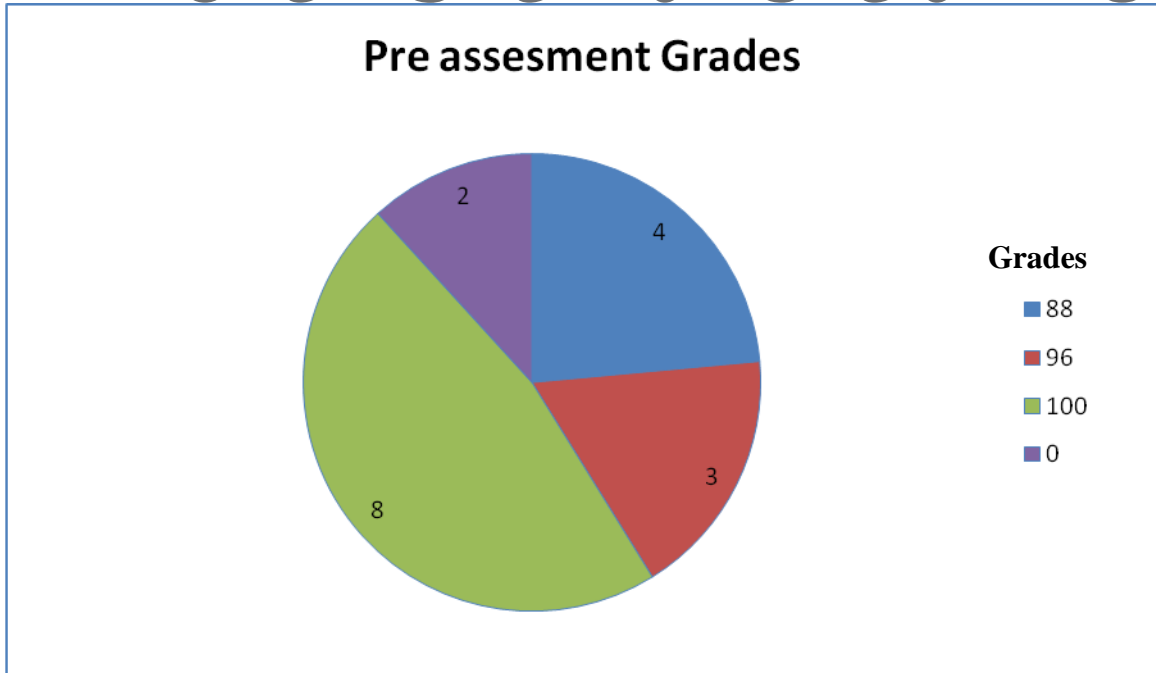
Objectives Align with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

The objective of the writing process contains the following TEKS. The TEKS are 8.17 which contain the writing/ grammar/ usage. The student applies standard grammar and usage to communicate clearly and effectively in writing. TEKS 8.17 A states that the students will write in complete sentences varying the types such as compound and complex sentences and use appropriately punctuated independent and dependent clauses. The writing process of TEKS 8.18 states that the student selects and uses the writing process for self- initiated and assigned writing. TEKS 8.18A cites that the student will generate ideas and plans for writing by using prewriting strategies such as brainstorming, geographic organizers, notes, and logs. TEKS 8.18 B states that the students will develop drafts by categorizing ideas, organizing themes into paragraphs, and blending paragraphs within larger units of text. TEK 8.18 C states that students should revise selected drafts by adding, elaborating, deleting, combining, and rearranging text. TEK 8.18 F states that students should use available technology to support aspects of creating, revising, editing, and publishing texts. TEK 7 is the reading comprehension where students comprehend a variety of strategies. TEK 7F states that the students will be able to identify main ideas and supporting details. TEK 7G states that the students will be able to summarize the texts. Text 7J states that the students will be able to read silently with comprehension for a sustained period of time. TEKS 11 is entitled reading / literary

concepts for their contributions to meaning in literary texts. The students will be able to analyze the relevance of setting and time (11B), and the students will be able to analyze characters and identify time and point of view (11C).

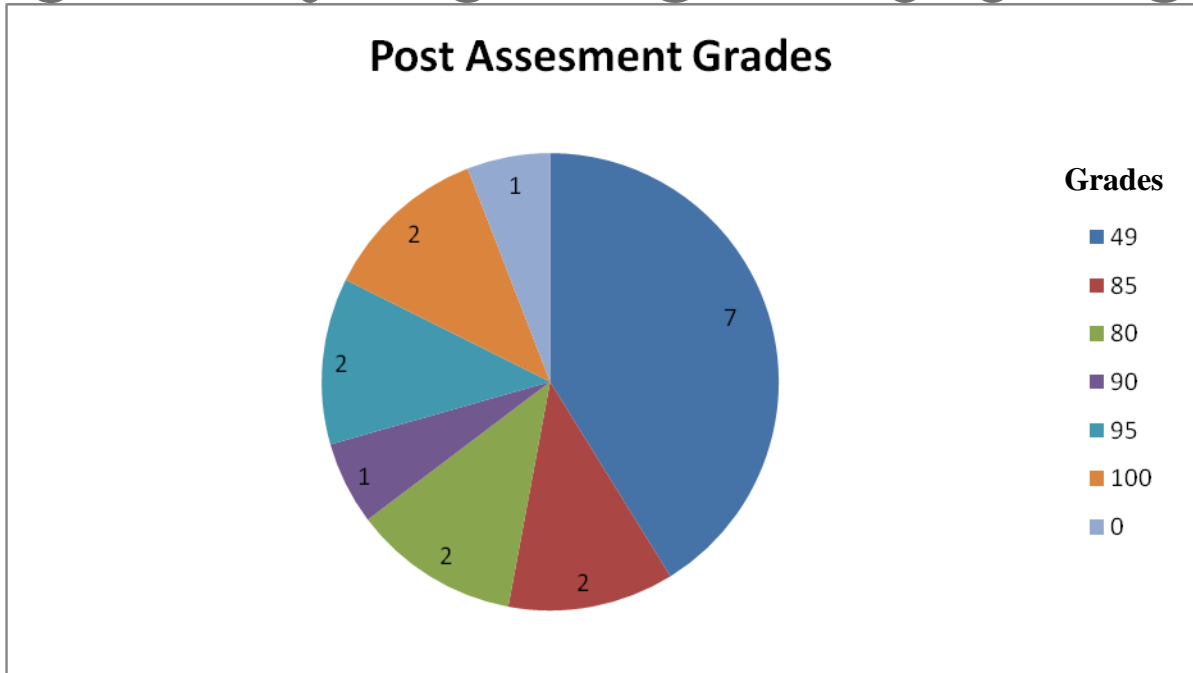
Section 3: Assessment Plan

Plot Structure



Assessment Plan Overview

Children's Books



Reliable Assessment

The pre-assessment strategy I used to evaluate my students will be an informal assessment. I decided to do an informal assessment after the first day of lecture which was on the second day. In order to adequately prepare students for the pre-assessment I reviewed over the plot components that was taught the previous day. As I reviewed with the students over the plot components I randomly called on students to come to the front of the classroom to label at least one plot component also providing the definition. The students had to explain to the class the plot component they wrote down. If the student got the answer wrong I would correct their mistake but still encourage the students at the same time. Before reading aloud to the students Arthur's Eyes I told the students to write down the events that take place in the story. This instructional activity will be a guide to help students determine the plot components. After reading aloud to the students Arthur's Eyes I told the students to label the plot components of a plot pyramid and when they finish we will discuss the plot components as a class. After finishing labeling the plot pyramid I evaluated the students by having them raise their hands if they agree or disagree with an answer with a students answer. I carefully noted how many students missed each plot component. I encouraged the students to raise their hands by explaining to them that this is not for a grade it is only used to determine your strengths and weakness of plot structure. The pre- assessment results determined that the students missed the rising action, climax, and falling action. At the end of the day, I looked in the student's literature notebooks to check to see the notes that the students took on the book of Arthur's Eyes. I noticed that the students did not write down the significant events from the story which was why so many students missed the plot components. I decided

not to use this instructional activity from a grade because so many students were confused about the overall goal.

The pre- assessment I counted for as a grade consisted of a group project. The group project allowed the students to work in cooperative learning groups. Each group was provided a different children's book. The students were given construction paper, markers, crayons, and pencils. The directions for each group were to read aloud together a children's book and write down on a separate sheet of paper the significant events of a story. On the construction paper the students had to draw the plot pyramid and label the plot components on the triangle. Underneath the triangle the students had to write the summary of the story. The students were allowed to decorate their plot pyramid such as drawing pictures.

The post assessment strategy I used with the students was allowing the students to create their own original children's books. The students had to complete the writing process before typing out their children's books. The writing process included the prewriting, drafting, editing, and revising stages. This post assessment allowed the students to not only identify the plot components but also allowed the students to become familiar with the writing process along with incorporating technology.

Valid Assessment and Scoring Procedures

There was not an official scoring for the first pre- assessment because it was only used to determine the student's strengths and weakness of the plot pyramid.

The scoring for the official pre- assessment plot pyramid of the group project was worth 3 points each for each label which included the exposition, the rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, and the summary. This gave the students a total of 18 points,

the maximum amount of bonus points was 2 points which was for creativity. The results of this formative assessment concluded that the majority of the class mastered the objective.

The scoring for the post assessment strategy was by rubric. The students were scored on a scale of 1- 4, with 4 being the highest score of an A and 1 being the lowest score of a D or F. On the rubric each score consist a checklist of objectives as to what the students should included in their story as well as grammar correctioins. The writing process was given as a 100 to those who provided it with their stories. The students were not allowed to start typing out their stories without their writing process being approved by me or Ms. Brown. The writing process helped the students determine their plot components as well as corrections in their children's books.

Section 4: Design for Instruction

Interpretation and Application of Pre- Assessment

The pre- assessment data suggests that the students have a weakness in determining the climax of the story. The strengths of the students are that they are able to determine the main idea or summary of a story. In other words the students were able to determine the beginning, middle, and the ending of the story which was included in their summaries. Another strength of the students is that they were able to determine the exposition, rising action, falling action, and resolution of the story.. I knew that if students could identify the plot components of a children's book they will eventually be able to identify the plot components of novels that we read in class. In preparing for the post assessment, I decided to allow the students to create their own children's books to determine their own plot structure.

Plan for Instruction

The learning theory that is related to the activities in this unit is cooperative learning. In 1984 David Johnson, Roger Johnson, and Edyth Holubec designed an instructional model for implementing cooperative- learning groups. The purpose of the model is that group participants must understand their task before they begin their work as a collaborative group. The reality is that not all students come to school with a full set of collaborative or social skills, and thus, many of these skills need to be taught and practiced. This learning theory contributed to the group projects of the plot pyramid assignment. (Student Teaching Field Experiences Handbook)

Activities



Use of Technology

During the post assessment, technology was incorporated when the students created their original children books. After the students finished with the writing process the class went to the computer lab to type out their stories. When the students finished typing out their stories they had the opportunity to decorate their stories by drawing pictures, inserting clip art, or finding pictures from the internet if they chose to. The use of technology exposed the students to the Microsoft Word settings such as font, spelling and grammar, paragraph, and saving documents on a USB drive.

Section 5: Instructional Decisions

Instructional Decisions Informed by Student Performance

One modification I decided to use for the pre- assessment was allowing the students to identify the plot components of a plot pyramid by reading a children's book on an elementary level of reading instead of reading a novel or an 8th grade level reading book. The reason for this modification was to make sure that the students could easily be able to identify the plot components without getting confused. During this semester, some of the novels we read in class were so complex that the plot components of a story move up and down. In other words, there was no particular order for the rising action, climax, and falling action.

Another modification I made for the students was teaching plot components at a slower pace. After the first pre- assessment I knew I would have to teach the plot components at a slower pace because many students were struggling with the plot components. For example, I decided to teach plot structure for two weeks instead. During these two weeks I carefully reviewed over each plot component with the students by allowing the students to work in cooperative groupings and completing the writing process, since many of the students are not strong in their grammar skills.

As a result, both of the modifications were effective. After grading the pre- assessments of the group project and the formative assessment of the children books majority of the students passed. The impact of the modification definitely helped the students understand plot structure because the information was being repeated daily. As a class discussion, we synthesized the information of a plot structure. The information was received to the students auditory, visually, and tactile/kinesthetic.

Instructional Decisions and Learning Goals

The instructional decision of providing a group assignment contributed to the realization of the unit learning objectives such as summary, character traits, and identifying plot structure. Although the students do not know it they are identifying the summary of the story as well as character traits. The summary is being identified through the use of plot components from the beginning, middle, and ending of the story. The character traits are being identified through the use of plot components when the students are discussing the actions of the characters as well as the attitudes.

Instructional Impact on Student Attitudes and/ or Behavior

The instructional impact created positive attitudes as well as appropriate behavior. As a result, the students understood the lesson objectives so well that they were very excited and enthusiastic about working with their group projects. I noticed that when the students were working in their groups they motivated each other to stay on task. Working in groups allowed the students to learn and teach each other. For example, the students explained to each other the plot components when other students in their groups did not understand. I learned that from monitoring the students they learn more from each other.

Section 6: Analysis of Student Learning

Graphic Representation of Assessment Results

Plot Structure Grades Vs. Children's Book Grades



Whole Group

The analysis of the assessment of the group project of plot pyramid demonstrates that the students have mastered the objectives. The overall class average was 96%. The cooperative groupings helped the student's progress. The analysis of the assessment of the children's books indicated that there were a higher percentage of students who failed. The reasons why the students failed was because they did not complete the assignment. I gave the students a week to finish the children's book and 7 students didn't. I know that these seven students are capable of mastering the objectives because they mastered the objectives with the plot pyramid. When comparing the pre and post assessment the students did master the objectives working in groups.

Reflection on Modifications to the Unit of Instruction

One change that I believe would improve student learning is to provide students with a variety of instruction. Prior to my experience in student teaching, I thought that direct instruction was the best method of student progress. During my lesson plans I incorporated different teaching methods such as cooperative groupings, direct instruction, and hands on activities. After using all three of the methods the student's progress improved when working in groups.

Reflection on Implications for Professional Development

After planning and implementations of this unit of instruction this has revealed many of my strengths and weakness. One of my strengths is my planning skills and

ability for a lengthy unit of instruction. When planning my activities I made sure to over plan. As I observed my cooperating teacher I noticed that she always over plans because you can never determine the pace of the class. There are certain times when the students are able to grasp the lesson objectives fast and we can move on. Then there are times when students are not able to grasp the lesson objectives or they may be struggling with the lesson objectives. As a teacher, I have learned that you must never assume what your students know. It is essential to provide the students with prior knowledge before beginning any lesson plan. Over planning allows the students to stay on task as well as helps control discipline problems. Discipline problems may occur when the students do not have anything constructive to do which is why enrichment activities are needed. Some of the enrichment activities I have used in the classroom are current event journals, activities that related to one of novels we are reading, etc.

One of my weakness regarding the planning and implementation of this unit of instruction is the ability to provide re- teach methods of the subject content areas. As a teacher, I understand the content area of the unit very well but I have a difficult time providing a second re-teach method when the first re- teaches method does not work. My cooperating teacher has taught me that when students do not understand the re-teach method it is best to allow another student who understands the lesson to explain the concept to the class. I have learned that students listen to each other, trust each other, and most importantly believe in each other. This is sometimes the best method of student learning to progress. I have also learned that when this method does not work than it is best to work with those students one on one.

Farewell



M s . C a g e

References

Blanson, D. (2009, January 2). *Aldine Independent School District*. Retrieved

December 7, 2009

Roe, B. D., Smith, S.H., & Ross, E.P. (2010). *Student Teaching and Field Experiences*

Handbook (Seventh ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.