

SAMPLE IPA ESSAY
Standard #4 (Real World Connections)
Grade One

Real world connections are a vital part of a lesson. Real world connections provide learning activities that will make content meaningful to students by connecting it to real-life circumstances. It is also very important to not only make real life connections, but also connect the content to students' personal experiences as well. In addition, providing opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in a variety of settings and giving students diverse learning experiences will also help students make real world connections. When this standard is applied it will help students learn new content being taught, because they will see why the content being taught is useful and how they can apply it. For example, teaching a lesson on geometry can be associated with architecture or engineering.

When connecting content to the students' schema, students internalize the information being taught in more depth and network the newly learned information in an organized matter. Theorist such as Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, and Jerome Brunner are advocates for constructivist teaching and my lesson follows the principles of constructivism in regards to connecting content to the students' scheme. For example, during my lesson, I continuously try to enable my students to engage in and out of states of equilibrium while connecting the content to the real world. This makes the learning process meaningful.

Throughout the lesson, I made real world connections to the students by linking the content to the students' lives and interests. In the motivation on page 2, lines 1-4, I showed the class pictures of people doing various activities and wearing winter clothing. I chose pictures that portrayed similar activities and clothing that the students can relate to. I used the pictures to motivate the students, so they can see the activities and clothing worn in the winter season. Using the pictures, I asked the students a series of questions including: "What season is this?" "How do you know?" "What else do you see that tells you it is the winter season?" "How does the winter season feel?" I asked these questions to get the students involved and excited about the lesson and help these young children recall their winter experiences.

During the procedure section of my lesson, I asked more questions that linked the new content to the students' schema. For example, I asked the students, "What is a thermometer used for?" and all of the students said it was used to tell the temperature of the weather. Then, I asked the students, "What other things are thermometers used for?" and Assontae said, "Thermometers are used by doctors and cooks." Julian said, "Weather people use thermometers." I told the students that thermometers are also used in your refrigerator, oven, air conditioner, heater, and are used by scientists. Connecting the students' knowledge about the uses of thermometers made it easier for the students to learn the terms in the lesson, because the students realized that thermometers are used all the time. In addition, I also made a three foot model of a thermometer for the students as a visual aide. The teacher-made thermometer was detailed and changed levels of mercury, so the students could see how and why the mercury rises and falls as we discussed the topic of mercury on page 3 lines 12_16. In addition, the teacher made thermometer assisted me when I taught temperature (Page 3, lines 6_10) and degrees (Page 3, lines 17_19). I used the thermometer as a visual aide because according to Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple

Intelligences, students learn through various modalities. The model thermometer was beneficial for students who are strong visual/spatial learners. I also used a class worksheet for activity #3 (page 4)(completed worksheet, page 6), where the students had to label and use the words in proper context. The worksheet also acted as a visual aide. Gardner believes that an children have different learning styles; therefore, it is important that I use more than just one learning style for the sake of my students.

In activity two of my procedure (Page 4), I read my story "Justin and Mary's Fun Winter Day" to the students (page 5). The story that I created required the students to use the vocabulary words that I taught in activity one, which were thermometer, temperature, mercury, and degrees. In this activity, the students were required to listen to my story and fill in the blanks with the correct term. This required the students to use the terms in proper context. The story made real world connections and connects to personal experiences, because it shows the students how the thermometer, temperature, mercury, and degrees are important and relate to them in their lives. The story was about two children who read a thermometer to determine what to wear on a winter morning before they went outside to play. The story made real world connections by teaching students how and why to use a thermometer.