

This sample essay includes a number of problems that could result in a poor grade on the exam. First, the writer identifies her philosophy as “constructivist,” but she doesn’t explain what this means or mention any constructivist theorists. Towards the end of the paper, she draws in Gardner and multiple learning styles, but she does not connect this back to constructivism. In addition, the writer does not explicitly identify how her lesson plan achieves the standards. Moreover, the only document this writer cites is her wallpaper worksheet. If there are other documents she wishes the scorer to assess, she needs to mention them explicitly. Finally, the organization of this essay is quite problematic. The essay rehashes the same material over and over. A more effective structure might have opened with theoretical underpinnings, moved into the particulars of the lesson plan (without repetition), and then connected theory with praxis.

SAMPLE IPA ESSAY

Standard #1 (Active Learning) & Standard #6 (Subject-Matter Content) Grade Four

I believe that this lesson demonstrates to the fullest my constructivist philosophy of teaching. I strongly believe that children learn better by doing and I believe that this lesson uses that approach. I provided opportunities throughout the lesson for students to discuss topics and concepts with one another and the teacher. At the start of the lesson, I discussed with students the proper tools for measuring area and when it makes sense to use inches rather than feet. The students agreed that when it came time to multiply to find the area they would rather have smaller numbers to work with. Before the students started measuring on their own, I demonstrated for them what they were to do by measuring the blackboard and calculating the surface area. To insure that the students understood the lesson, we had a discussion at the end of the lesson on the different ways in which they were able to calculate the surface area of their group of desks. This activity allowed the students the opportunity to work together and figure out as a team the best way to accomplish the task. One group added the four areas of the individual desks together and another group multiplied the area of one desk by four. The remainder of the groups measured the group of desks to calculate the surface area. This lesson built upon the student’s prior knowledge of multiplying two digit numbers. Once the students had taken their measurements, they needed to be some what proficient in multiplying in order to calculate the surface areas. To insure that the students understood the content of the lesson, I created a worksheet in which they were to apply what they had learned to a new situation: wall

papering a room.. The students seemed really interested in the worksheet. I believe that using my own name helped to make it real for the students. Thinking that they were actually helping me to wallpaper my kitchen gave them a purpose for wanting to solve the problems. A lot of students liked the bonus question, they were curious to see how much it would cost me to wallpaper my kitchen.

The content of the lesson was taught in a manner that insured that the students understood the subject-matter fully. Throughout the lesson, students were given sufficient time to participate in activities in which they were asked to measure and calculate surface areas; textbooks, desks, and groups of desks. As the students were taking measurements and calculating surface areas, my teammates and I walked around the classroom assisting students who needed help. At the start of the measuring activities, a few students were having trouble using the tape measure, so I demonstrated for them individually and then the entire class on the proper way to hold and read the measuring tape. I selected the learning activities for the lesson very carefully and thoughtfully. I wanted the students to start off by measuring a small area; textbook, then proceed to measuring a larger area; desks and finally work together to measure and calculate the surface area of a group of four desks. I also wanted them to be able to apply what they had learned to a new situations, so I developed the wall paper worksheet / activity in which they were to apply their knowledge of calculating surface area to wall papering an entire room; they had to calculate the surface area of the room, figure out how much wallpaper would be used / how many rolls and how much the entire project would cost. I believe that the lesson was extremely successful because it incorporated three of Gardner's multiple intelligences. To assist visual learners, I used an overhead projector as a reference for calculating surface area. Auditory learners were accommodated through the oral explanations and discussions of taking area measurements. Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners benefited the most through hands on activities in which they measured and calculated surface areas. Students were required to demonstrate their understanding of finding surface area measurements by measuring and calculating the surface area of a textbook, desk, and group of desks. Students were given the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the process in which they calculated the surface area of a group of desks. Students were also given the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of what they learned

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Standards #1 & #6

by applying what they had learned to a new situation: wallpapering a room (the wall paper worksheet).