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Educational Psychology

Comprehensive Report

Introduction

<u>District Profile</u>

The percentage of the students that attend Medina City schools that are white is 92.94 %. The percentage of black students attending Medina City schools is 2.54%. The percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander students attending Medina City Schools is 0.88%. The percentage of American Indian/Alaskan Native students attending Medina City Schools is 0.19%. The percentage of Hispanic students attending Medina City Schools is 0.84%. The percentage of multiracial students attending Medina City Schools is 2.62%. The percentage of students attending Medina City Schools that are disabled is 13.13 %(Ohio Department of Education [ODE], 2007a).

Medina City Schools is a suburban district located in Medina County in Medina City, Ohio.

The median income in the Medina City School District is $41,935.00 (ODE, 2007c). The average income in the Medina City School District is $60,675 (ODE, 2007c). The percentage of students in poverty in the Medina City School District is 0.17% (ODE, 2007c). The percentage of students in the Medina City School District that are considered to be economically disadvantaged is 10.8% (ODE, 2007a).

Medina City Schools were ranked as Excellent for the 2006-2007 school year (ODE, 2007a). Medina City Schools Performance Index Score was 101.3 out of a possible 120(ODE, 2007a). Medina City Schools met 28 out of 30 Indicators; the Indicators not met were the 5th Grade Achievement Social Studies Indicator and the 8th Grade Achievement Social Studies Indicator (ODE, 2007a). Neither Indicator passed on the State level either.

The Adequate Yearly Progress for the Medina City School District was determined to be Not Met (ODE, 2007a). Only five out of the six goals needed were met. The Reading Proficiency Goal was not met. The District Improvement Status was At Risk (ODE, 2007a).

The value added student count for Medina City Schools for grades four through eight is 2,686 (ODE, 2007d). The count for fourth grade is 538; the count for fifth grade is 525. The count for sixth grade is 536. The count for seventh grade is 549. The count for eighth grade is 538. The value added gain for all grades in reading is -2.6, with a value added standard error of 0.3, and a value added classification of red (ODE, 2007d). The value added gain for all grades in mathematics is 2.2, the standard error is 0.2, and the value added classification is green (ODE, 2007d). The value added gain for all grades in all tests is -0.2, the standard error is 0.2, and the value added classification is yellow (ODE, 2007d).

School Profile

The percentage of Students attending Medina High School that are black is 3.0 %. The percentage of students that are Asian/Pacific Islander is 0.8%. The percentage of students that are Hispanic is 0.8%. The percentage of students that are multiracial is 2.0%. The percentage of students that are white at Medina High School is 93.2%. The percentage of students attending Medina High School that have a disability is 14.3% (ODE, 2007b).
Medina High School is located at 777 E Union St, Medina, OH (ODE, 2007b). Medina High School is a suburban school.

The percentage of economically disadvantaged students attending Medina High School is 7.1% (ODE, 2007b).

For the 2006-2007 school year Medina High School was rated as Excellent (ODE, 2007b). Medina High School met 12 out of 12 Performance Indicators and their Performance

Index Score was 105 out of a possible 120 (ODE, 2007b). Medina High School met all of their Adequate Yearly Progress requirements (ODE, 2007b). The school's Improvement Status was reported as OK (ODE, 2007b).

<u>Classroom Profile</u>

My students will all be between fifteen and sixteen years old. My class will be a sophomore class, tenth grade. I will be teaching a Modern American History class. We will start the year at the end of the 19th century discussing the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the nation during the Second Industrial Revolution (ODE, 2004). We will move on to the Spanish American War and talk about imperialism and the emergence of the United States as a world power. Then we will move on to conflicts the U.S. faced as a world power such as WWI and WWII and the cold war. My class will analyze major political, social, and economic developments of the 20th century along with the causes and effects of those developments (ODE, 2004). We will also discuss the civil rights movement, civil disobedience, and the Vietnam War. My class will discuss the diversity of America. They will learn about immigration and how it has affected our country. They will also learn about discrimination. We will discuss the U.S. Constitution and Supreme Court cases and we will examine how government policy is shaped and influences by different groups (ODE, 2004).

There will be twenty kids in my class. There will be nineteen Caucasian children in my classroom and one African American. One child will be economically disadvantaged and qualifies for the schools free or reduced lunch program. There will be three children in my class with disabilities. One of them is the student who is also economically disadvantaged; he has a reading learning disability. There is also another child with a reading learning disability and one child who has epilepsy.

This particular class would be my fifth period class, right after lunch. The desks in my classroom will be divided in the middle, facing each other and only three rows deep so that nobody is seated too far in the back and unable to pay attention. This arrangement will also help for class debates. There will be five computers in the back of the room for the students use during group research projects. There will be world maps and maps of the United States on the walls, there will be pictures depicting important people and events like Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Vietnam War.

Characteristics of Learners

Cognitive Development

According to Piaget's four stages of cognitive development my students will be in the Formal Operations stage. At this stage my students will be able to reason about hypothetical ideas; they will have the ability to draw logical deductions about situations that have no basis in physical reality. Students at this stage are able to use proportional reasoning, the conceptual understanding of fractions, percentages, decimals, and ratios. Students at this stage are also able to separate and control variables; they will have the ability to test hypotheses by manipulating one variable while holding other variables constant (Ormrod, 2006). As mentioned before there are three children in my class with disabilities, two with a reading learning disability and one with epilepsy. The two students with a reading learning disability may have difficulty keeping up with assigned readings in the textbook and with directions for assignments, so when explaining directions or notes I will go over them explicitly with these two students and help them with directions on tests. For long assignments I might give them a shorter version to complete. For the student with epilepsy, depending on the severity of the seizure the student

may just miss a few seconds of the lesson, I may just have to go over key parts of the lesson that the student may have missed, but I may be required sometimes to comfort and reassure the student and classmates and gently guide them back to their seat and help them remain calm and ignore uncontrollable behaviors (Deutsch 2007).

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory maintains that social, cultural, and historical contexts in which students develop have profound influences on their cognitive abilities (Ormrod 2006). Students encounter culturally appropriate ways of thinking about and interpreting objects and events through social interactions. Students from different cultures develop differently because of varying environments, historical circumstances, and needs. Useful activities that can be used to promote social interaction in the classroom would include group activities, current event projects, and field trips.

Scaffolding is the support mechanism that helps a learner successfully perform a task with in his or her zone of proximal development (Ormrod, 2006). Scaffolding can come in the form of guided participation - where an adult helps a child complete and activity, or apprenticeship – which is a mentorship in which a learner works intensely with an experienced adult to learn how to perform complex skills. Scaffolding can come from other students as well as teachers. Cooperative learning is an approach to instruction in which students work with a small group of peers to achieve a common goal and help one another learn (Ormrod, 2006). An example of this activity is that before a test on World War One I could split my students up into groups of three and give them an incentive like any group in which all three students get an A will get extra credit or a homework pass. This encourages the students to help each other learn because they all need to do well to get the prize. When students help one another learn they

provide scaffolding for one another's' efforts and so tend to have higher self-efficacy for accomplishing challenging tasks (Ormrod, 2006).

It is important that my lessons capture students' attention. Some strategies to do this would be asking lots of questions to students, putting classroom materials like globes and maps to use, encouraging my students to take notes, arranging the seating arrangement so that students will be seated in a fashion such that their attention will be focused on the teacher, and providing a stimulating teaching environment where students are encouraged to participate in discussions and everyone wants to pay attention. Asking students questions during lecture and having them recall prior knowledge to connect with the new information in the lesson is an important step in processing information into the long-term memory. Elaborating and adding new details to old information will make new information more meaningful to the student. Visual imagery, the process of forming mental pictures of objects or ideas, is a very useful strategy. Organization of lesson or study skills is very important because students learn better when they organize new information and can make connections between new and old information.

Personal Development

According to Erikson my students will be in his fifth stage – Identity vs. Confusion, which states that during adolescence, children are exploring their independence and developing a sense of self (Van Wagner, 2008). Those who receive proper encouragement and reinforcement through personal exploration will emerge from this stage with a strong sense of self and a feeling of independence and control. Those who remain unsure of their beliefs and desires within will be insecure and confused about themselves and the future (Van Wagner, 2008). This self socialization - the tendency to integrate personal observations and others input into self

constructed standards for behavior and to choose action consistent with those standards, has a big impact on students at this age (Ormrod, 2006).

Sense of Self is the perceptions, beliefs, judgments, and feelings about oneself as a person (Ormrod, 2006).   Parenting styles have a big influence on the personal development of students because the home is where most of the students' time is typically spent. The parents are able to influence a student's development throughout the course of their entire life where as a teacher may only be able to influence the student during the school year. There are four styles of parenting: Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive, and Uninvolved. The Authoritative style of parenting tends to be most beneficial for many children and the authoritative style is encouraged in the classroom by setting high expectations for students' behavior and consistently enforcing rules (Ormrod, 2006). The amount of positive encouragement, or lack thereof, at home can greatly affect a student's sense of self. Culture also greatly affects a student's development. Students from different cultures can develop different ways of thinking and learning. Peer relationships are very important at this stage and influence the development of sense of self.

Sense of self is developed throughout childhood and adolescence. Around the preschool age, a child will describe themselves in concrete, easily observable characteristics and behaviors. During elementary school children compare themselves with classmates and their descriptions of themselves become more realistic. In the upper elementary ages many self-observations are pulled into generalizations. During adolescence children gain greater capability for abstract thought and think of himself or herself in terms of general, fairly stable traits. At this age social acceptance and physical appearance are important. Adolescents are able to reflect on their own characteristics and abilities and begin to struggle with seeming inconsistencies with their self-perceptions (Ormond, 2006). Appropriate teaching strategies for students at this stage would

include giving students opportunities to examine and try out a variety of adult like rules. When discussing the potential consequences of risky behavior, I would present the facts, but without making the students so anxious or upset that they cannot effectively learn and remember information and avoid scare tactics.

Social/Moral Development

As adolescents my students will be able to describe themselves in terms of general, stable traits, and as noted above, will be able to reflect on their own characteristics and abilities. At this stage of development the major issue for students is to develop a sense of the role that they will play in the adult world, they must achieve an identity in the terms of a career, sex, religion, and culture. As a teacher I can help students with this issue by showing them possible career options and introducing them to information about religion and culture.

The most important contributors to a child's personal, social, and moral development are other people. Moral Development is associated with three emotions: shame, guilt, and empathy. Shame is the overall feeling of humiliation or embarrassment when a child fails to meet the standards of moral behavior set for them by others. Guilt is a feeling of discomfort when the child knows they have caused someone else pain or distress. Empathy is experiencing the same feelings as someone in an unfortunate experience (Ormrod, 2006). As a child develops they gradually progress away from self-centeredness toward increasing awareness of the needs and perspectives of others and an increased desire to help others. To address the moral development of my students I could have them work on a community project that helps others or encourage them to volunteer in their community. This is a common practice in high schools.

Motivation and Self-Regulation

     Motivation is the inner state that energizes, directs, and sustains behavior. Motivation

helps students learn and perform well in that it directs behavior toward goals, increases effort and

persistence in goals, affects cognitive processes, determines reinforcing and punishing

consequences, and can lead to improved performance. Extrinsic Motivation exists when the

source of motivation lies outside of the individual and the task being performed (Ormrod, 2006).

Extrinsic motivation can promote successful learning and productive behavior and can increase

an individual's time on task and performance. Intrinsic Motivation exists when the source of

motivation lays within the individual a task; the individual finds the task enjoyable or worthwhile

in and of itself (Ormrod, 2006). Intrinsic motivation encourages students to pursue a project on

their own, be cognitively engaged in the task, undertake more challenging aspects of a task,

engage in more meaningful learning, show creativity in performance, and persist in the face of

failure. Teachers can facilitate intrinsic motivation by talking about intrinsic motives rather that

extrinsic motives for pursuing classroom activities, use adult models who visibly pursue their

own interests, and express intrinsic enjoyment of something they are doing to promote observers'

intrinsic motivation for some activities, and relate classroom topics to students own lives,

experiences, needs and feelings. Intrinsic motivation is more likely to emerge when certain

cognitive factors are available, like when students believe they are able to successfully

accomplish tasks and feel in control of their lives. When students feel intrinsically motivated to

do something, eventually they will begin to self-regulate their work and set their own goals

(Ormrod, 2006). To foster a learning goal orientation a teacher could begin the year off with

smaller tasks for students that they are easily motivated to do, as the year goes on those tasks will

get bigger and bigger while the students still find themselves motivated to do the work. Students

are also more likely to focus on their schoolwork when their non-academic needs have been met. Students are more motivated to do activities that are interesting, important to them, and have utility. An example of an interesting activity that would motivate students to study would be have study games before tests, similar to the game jeopardy, where students can join in group discussions in teams and earn points for right answers.

Assessment

Diagnostic

The purpose of a diagnostic assessment is to ascertain each student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills prior to the lesson. Establishing these permits the instructor to remediate students and adjust the lesson to meet each student's unique needs (Swearingen 2008). A diagnostic assessment would test the material the student learned in the previous related course. Because students develop different ways of thinking and learning due to growing up in different cultures some students may need the curriculum adjusted more than others.

Formative

A formative evaluation is similar to a diagnostic assessment in that it also is conducted before or during instruction to facilitate instructional planning and to enhance students learning. During formative assessments teachers feed information back into students in ways that enable the students to learn better (Swearingen 2008). Examples of a formative assessment could include a quiz taken before a lesson, or questions asked by a teacher during a lesson or a discussion. Formative assessments should occur regularly throughout the instructional process.

<u>Summative</u>

A summative assessment is an evaluation conducted after instruction to assess students' final achievement. An example of a summative assessment would be a final exam given at the end of a school year that would encompass all of the material learned throughout the year.

Assessments are important because they encourage review of the material learned and also encourage extrinsic motivation. Taking tests can be a learning experience and gives students feedback about their progress. This can encourage intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. It is important to keep students updated on their grades. Giving detailed and constructive feedback to students will help them determine what goals they should set for themselves. Assessments are also used to monitor a student's progress, which is essential knowledge when it comes to determining learning goals for the child. School wide assessments, such as Value-Added Tests, provide a goal for an entire grade or an entire school or district to strive for. Individual assessments let teachers know how far a student is from achieving the Value-Added goal and from there they can adjust their teaching strategies to help each child reach the benchmark.

Conclusion

From completing this paper I have learned a lot about the learning, social, and motivational needs of my future students. By understanding the cognitive development of my students I will be able adjust my teaching strategies to their cognitive levels so that they will be able to learn better. As a teacher I will see my students every day and I will be an important factor in their personal, social, and moral development. It is important for me to be a good role model of the appropriate adult behavior and to give my students the proper amount of

encouragement and reinforcement they need to gain a strong sense of self and a feeling of independence and control. I have also learned that keeping my students motivated is a key factor in the learning process. Motivating and keeping students interested will lead them to become self-regulated learners. This project had taught me that there is a lot more to teaching than just the subject material. Of course the subject material is very important, but the most important thing is the way an educator teaches. All students learn in different ways and an educator needs to understand a student's learning abilities in order to best serve their needs. School is one of the most important places in a child's life and as an educator I will need to be not only a teacher, but also a role model and a source of moral support for my students.

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