

Multiple Assessment Project
Taylor Gustafson
November 14, 2017
Rose Park Elementary School

This semester my Science Methods course had the wonderful opportunity of traveling to Rose Park Elementary over the course of six weeks to work with a fourth grader that we were paired with. This was an experience that I encourage all teachers to try out because I think the benefits of it are remarkable! Through this process my science buddy and I developed and conducted an inquiry based science exploration directly focusing on the Great Salt Lake. I was able to evaluate him on a weekly basis including the weeks leading up to the field trip out to the lake. This helped me develop a good sense of his background knowledge with exploring science and the skills he possessed and/or needed to work on.

Student Profile

Anthony is an outgoing student. He is good about maintaining eye contact while communicating and I think that is a special skill to possess at such a young age. From the beginning, Anthony was intrigued in science. When I first worked with him on an ice experiment that we did as a class he was very precise and thoughtful about how he wanted to conduct the experiment. There was very little prompting in ideas needed from me. He demonstrated a willingness to learn and explore by establishing his knowledge through scientific language throughout our time together. In asking Anthony what he thinks is the best way that he learns science, he answered with "doing experiments". This told me that he a very hands on learner. This is something that helped me a lot through my interactions with Anthony because I did my best to create experiences with him that would best help him learn through doing.

Assessment of Inquiry

Through this experience, I conducted formative and summative assessments of Anthony. Following every time that I met with Anthony I filled out an assessment of inquiry that helped me directly reflect on his performance that day. This would be my formative assessments because they were ongoing. This was also used to help me track the progress of development of Anthony's processing skills through the several weeks we were together. I did a total of 5 assessments on Anthony. All evaluations were based on a 1-4 scale, 1 meaning not yet developed and 4 meaning developed proficiently. The five statements that I assessed him on are below:

1. Student is able to make simple predictions and inferences based upon observations. 4,4,3,4
2. Student conducts a simple investigation. 3,2,2,3
3. Student relates investigation to prior experiences. 3,4,4,4
4. Student suggests causes for what is observed. 4,4,4,4
5. Student relates learning to out of school situations. 3,4,4,4

As you can see his above, Anthony was very good at making predictions, often related what he was learning to prior experiences, and could relate his learning to out of school situations. He often struggled conducting a simple investigation. By this, I mean he would change variables within the experiment a lot to try and make it more exciting. For example, with our experiment about lake he wanted to try about 10 different liquids that the brine shrimp egg might be able to

survive in, but we finally got it narrowed down to 4. Anthony also would lose focus through the experiment if the results were not immediate. He became disengaged and wanted to start to talk about other things in life. Through this time I had to really focus on asking him intriguing questions that would help him stay engaged in the experiment.

Poster Session & Student Progress

I believe that the poster session was the time that Anthony really thrived throughout our time together. He was so excited to come and visit Westminster and that could have been a big part of his confidence in the poster session. When we had visitors to our poster he immediately began talking and explaining how we traveled to the lake, the different things that he thought about doing his experiment on and how he came to choose experimenting with the brine shrimp eggs. I often had to remind him to talk about his hypothesis and the results. He seemed to want to exaggerate a lot of the time on what we actually did and what actually happened so that is an area we had to tone down. Having been reflecting so much on my experience with Anthony I have thought about if his lack of being able to remember certain things about his experiment is a lack of understanding or not. That was my biggest struggle with Anthony. He was really good at acting like he knew certain things at times and then when I would go deeper into questions it would seem that he was guessing and didn't really understand.

This was one of two summative assessments that I was able to conduct with Anthony. The second one was the post assessment that I gave to him about his experience through this our time together. I had previously given him a pre-

assessment that helped me develop a good sense of where he was before we began learning together. The post assessment included questions relating to the Great Salt Lake and it made him reflect on the knowledge that he obtained from doing his experiment. The answers that he gave on this assessment showed me that Anthony grew more than I was anticipating. He understood a lot more about the lake than he had written down on the pre-assessment. This shows me that he was paying attention and actually fully grasping the information that I was hoping he would get out of the experience. He also included some scientific writing within his post assessment such as how he conducted his “hypothesis” and the “procedure” he followed through with.

There was a difference between the ways Anthony stated his answers as well. At the beginning of the weeks he was having trouble writing in complete sentences. He would always bullet points so it was very encouraging to see the improvement in that area.

Conclusion & Recommendations

I do not have a lot of concerns when it comes to Anthony and his learning of Science subject matter. He seems to really enjoy learning and easily can relate things to his prior knowledge, which is key. My biggest concern would be his lack of focus when things are not done exactly the way he predicted or was hoping for. He often disengages himself when his friends aren’t participating in what they are supposed to be doing. He seems to be influenced a lot by classmates and wants to be the center of attention. I think this often works for him because he is a charming young boy and can easily get away with making it seem like he knows what going on on the

surface level, but usually is falling behind when you dig deeper. What I would do to help Anthony get beyond this point is do my best of keeping him engaged in the activity at hand. I was often able to do this with him because I was working one on one with him. I think that by having me always there keeping him involved it really helped him grow and learn more because he was always engaged.

Overall, I absolutely loved this experience. I think this was one of the best learning opportunities for me, as a teacher, at Westminster.