

Action Research Inquiry-Based Project

All students, both student teachers and CPL students, will engage in an action research plan to demonstrate their instructional impact on students in the classroom. Students will select a focus, identify research questions, collect and analyze data, and report results with informed actions. Students will complete the Action Research Case Study and include necessary artifacts to substantiate their research. The project will be completed within the first ten weeks of their student teaching assignment and will be due to the instructor of Student Teaching Seminar by the twelfth week of the term (sixth class meeting of Student Teaching Seminar).

Purpose:

The purpose of this Action Research Inquiry-Based Project is to provide measurable data to verify that the student teachers are making a positive impact on the students in the classroom. This research project will assess the student teacher in the area of identifying an educational need in the classroom based on the school's curriculum and the Missouri Learning Standards (MLS). Then based on specific assessment data obtained concerning this need, the choice of instructional strategies and learning activities incorporated into the lessons by the student teacher will be evaluated according to their appropriateness and use in the classroom. The use of differentiation in meeting the needs of the individual students in the classroom will also be considered, as will the use of strategies to encourage critical thinking. The success of these instructional strategies and learning activities will be evaluated by the student teacher by accumulating specific data from the classroom students' performance. This data will be reported in the case study. Based on the classroom students' strengths and weaknesses, the student teacher will develop remedial

lessons to aid those students who need additional instruction. Student teachers will also determine what learning activities may be employed to advance future learning in the classroom in this focused area.

Finally, the student teachers will reflect on this process. In the reflection, they will indicate what instructional strategies and learning activities were most effective and those which showed little or no benefit to students. The use of the types of differentiation and its effectiveness will also be examined. The student teachers will also explain how the data obtained before and after instruction will be communicated to the supervising teacher, parents, and the classroom students.

Action Research Case Study

Based on the school's curriculum and the Missouri Learning Standards, and in conjunction with the cooperating teacher, the student teacher will determine a unit of study for this action research project. The student teacher should consider what will accommodate the class, cooperating teacher, and the students' needs. Once the area of focus has been identified, the student teacher will begin with a pre-assessment and an interest survey, teach a unit (at least two weeks), and administer the post-test.

What is the focus of this Action Research Inquiry-Based Project?

Why was it chosen? (Provide specific curriculum and MLS standards along with an explanation of why this particular topic was chosen.) This section focuses your thinking on what students should know at the end of the unit or topic of instruction. (Wiggins and McTighe) These standards will form the basis of your objectives and guide your assessments. Also consider how

you can incorporate integrated learning by including multiple content area standards in your focused topic.

Process and research questions:

Demographic Knowledge of the classroom, school, and community

The student teacher will demonstrate knowledge of the students in the classroom, the school, and the community, including exceptionalities, diversities, and resources available.

1. Explain the grade level, and general age of the students in your classroom.
2. Explain the diversities present in your classroom; i.e. males/females, ethnicities, languages, etc.
3. Explain the exceptionalities in your classroom; i.e. gifted, IEP, and so forth.
4. What resources are available to you in the classroom both in terms of materials and personnel that you could use to help you teach this focused topic?
5. Explain the context of your school; i.e. Grades, enrollment, free/reduced lunch, MAP and AYP data, etc. What resources are available to you, both materials and personnel, that you could use to help you teach this focused topic?
6. Explain the important context of the community, i.e. suburban, socioeconomic. What researches are available to you in this community which may aid your instruction and/or student learning in this topic?

Assessment of learning need

Artifacts: Student interest survey and analysis

Pre-assessment and analysis

Respond to the following prompts:

1. Following an analysis of the interest survey, how will the knowledge you obtained from it direct your instruction? (For example: Do the students have any particular likes or dislikes which will need to be addressed in order to provide motivation? Are there certain areas where students may be of help in teaching the rest of the students because of their interests?)
2. Following an analysis of the pre-assessment, how will the knowledge you obtained from it direct your instruction? (For example: Are there areas you will not need to teach because all of the students demonstrated proficiency in that standard? Are there areas where you will have to focus your instruction more intently because your students appear not to have background knowledge in those standards? What does this pre-assessment tell you about the students' instructional needs?)

Instruction

Artifact: One lesson plan using MBU's template

Since this is a long term focus, you do not need to provide lessons plans throughout the lesson. But based on the information from the interest survey, the pre-assessment, and the standards you are using, these prompts address what types of instructional strategies and learning activities were used in teaching this topic: When you think of instructional strategies, consider

those strategies you learning in Methods of Teaching; i.e. directed instruction, concept teaching, demonstration, and so forth. When you think of learning strategies, consider what students do to develop knowledge and/or skills; i.e., graphic organizers, study guides, discussions, projects and so forth.

1. Explain several of the instructional strategies you used in teaching this focused topic. Why did you choose these particular strategies? How did they help the students in your classroom learn the necessary knowledge and/or skills required of them? How did the use of these strategies provide differentiation to the students in the classroom?
2. Explain several of the learning activities you used in teaching this focused topic. Why did you choose these particular strategies? How did they help the students in your classroom learn the necessary knowledge and/or skills required of them? How did the use of these learning activities provide differentiation to the students in the classroom?

Assessment

As a long term focus, you used many types of assessment, both formative and summative. In these prompts, respond with some types of assessments you used which allowed you to ascertain if the students were developing the skills and/or knowledge they needed to meet the standards you determined at the beginning of this action research.

Artifacts: Checklist of standards chosen for this focus topic with percentage of students who achieved each standard.

4-5 Items of data collected to perform comprehensive analysis

1. What types of formative assessments did you use during the instruction you provided in this action research? How did they support the knowledge and/ or skills the students were to be learning? Provide specific examples.
2. What types of summative assessments did you use during the instruction you provided in this action research. How did they inform you about the knowledge and/ or skills the students were to be learning? Provide specific examples.
3. Based upon both the formative and summative assessments, how did you modify your instruction to meet the needs of your students who were not proficient? In other words, what did you do to ensure that the students who did not demonstrate proficiency in a skill or knowledge, were able to relearn that knowledge or skill to achieve proficiency? Provide specific examples of how you helped these children achieve success on particular standards.
4. Based upon both the formative and summative assessments, how did you modify your instruction to meet the needs of your students who demonstrated proficiency about what is expected according to the standards? In other words, what types of activities did you provide to those students to encourage further learning? Provide specific examples of activities provided to these students based on the standards.
5. Based on final assessments, explain how your teaching was instrumental in helping the students to reach the goals presented in the standards. What continued weaknesses do you note and what might a teacher do in the future after this research project to continue to enhance student knowledge and skills in this area?
6. How was progress towards the goals set by the standards communicated to the cooperating teacher, the students, and the parents?

Focus students

Chose two students you want to focus on for this case study. Use them to answer these prompts. Try to choose students with different needs.

1. Why did you chose the focus students?
2. What specific types of interventions/differentiations did you need to use with each student in terms of assessments, instructional strategies, and learning activities.
3. Based on assessments, did the interventions result in progress toward meeting the standards? Provide specific examples of how the student demonstrated progress toward meeting the standards.

Reflection

Based on your teaching in this action research, respond to the following prompts.

1. What instructional strategies did you find most beneficial to use in this focused topic?
What instructional strategies did you find showed little or no benefit with the students in the classroom?
2. What learning activities did you find most beneficial to use in this focused topic?
What learning activities did you find least beneficial or of no benefit with the students in the classroom?
3. What differentiations did you use that were of benefit to the students? Which did not seem to be of any benefit?
4. If you were to teach this focused topic again, what would you be sure to do over, and what would you want to change?
5. As a reflective practitioner, what were your strengths in this action research and what were your weaknesses? How can you address those weaknesses in the future?