

EDUC 305 Case Study Assignment Guidelines F10

Part I Case Study

Case Study

Megan Starks has recently accepted a fifth grade teaching position in the Hampton School District to fulfill her life-long dream of becoming a professional educator. Megan has recently earned a degree in elementary education from a local university, and completed her student teaching internship in fifth grade in the same school district. Nancy Bailey, Megan's cooperating teacher, had a very diverse classroom, and believed in using differentiation of instruction as a means to meet the academic needs of all students. As a first year teacher, Megan is eager and committed to ensuring that all of her students are successful academically.

Before the start of the school year, Megan reviewed her class roster of 19 students and carefully read her students' academic records. These records indicate that she has 4 students with learning disabilities in reading, 2 students with learning disabilities in Math, 6 students who have ADD/ADHD, and 7 who have been identified as gifted and talented. Megan's students are also diverse in terms of ethnicity and socio-economic status, as 11 students are Caucasian, 6 are African-American, and 2 are Hispanic-American. Eight students are from low-income families.

As Megan begins planning the instructional units for the first semester, she remembers Nancy Bailey's views on differentiation and conducts research to further study this strategy and its effectiveness. She finds a research article by Dr. Kelly Anderson and decides to use the information included in the article as she plans her unit. Additionally, Megan also decides to meet with knowledgeable, veteran teachers at her school to gain additional resources and information. As a veteran teacher, you agree to meet with Megan to offer her information and advice as she prepares for the upcoming school year.

Directions

For this assignment, you should use the Anderson article and your textbook to answer the questions below. You should write a detailed, thorough response to each of the following questions. Use examples appropriately to illustrate your thoughts and ideas. **Make sure you provide appropriate references to acknowledge the resources that you use to complete this assignment. Additionally, you should paraphrase the references and use direct quotes appropriately when you use the author's exact words. If you have questions about how to reference material, please ask your instructor.**

1. Megan will have exceptional learners in her class this school year. She knows that she will have students who are gifted and students with learning disabilities and attention disorders. As a teacher, what does Megan need to know about these students? What are the characteristics of students with learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD, and gifted and talented abilities? What does Megan need to know about these learners to help them be successful in the classroom?
2. Megan also has children who live in poverty in her classroom and is concerned about her ability to reach these students. Using Gorski's article and our class discussions as a guide, what does Megan need to know about these students to help them be successful? How would you caution this beginning teacher to avoid common assumptions many teachers make in teaching students who live in poverty?
3. Megan's class is also diverse culturally and ethnically. When working with students from diverse backgrounds, what strategies should teachers use to help them be successful? Consider the concepts "funds of knowledge," multicultural education, and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory.
4. Megan plans to use differentiation of instruction to meet the needs of her students. Do you recommend this instructional strategy? What is differentiation? What does differentiation involve and how does differentiation allow teachers to meet the needs of all students in the classroom?
5. To differentiate instruction, Megan will need to know the critical elements. What are the elements of differentiation? How do teachers differentiate their lessons to accommodate all students?
6. Using the grade and subject area that you plan to teach, create an appropriate example of a lesson using differentiation. Be sure to explain how you will vary the content of the activity, the assessment, and the instructional strategies to meet the needs of the diverse learners. You should be able to create an example using the strategies discussed in the above research articles.

Part II: Performance Based Learning

Part II: PBL

You have recently been hired to develop a curriculum for a school district's new alternative school for at-risk students. You believe that the curriculum must provide these students with meaningful and authentic learning experiences and must encourage active participation in lesson activities. Therefore, you develop a curriculum that emphasizes problem-based learning (PBL) in every subject.

When your plan is shared with the school board, several members of the district's school board express concerns that the curriculum lacks structure and rigor. They are unconvinced and need additional resources and information to understand the curriculum approach that you are advocating. Therefore, the superintendent of the district asks you to attend a school board meeting in which you will present additional information about PBL.

Directions

Your task for this assignment is to convince school board members that PBL is appropriate for students. To complete this assignment, you should respond to each of the following questions:

1. Who are students placed at risk? What are the characteristics of these students?
2. What exactly is problem-based learning? How does this instructional approach help students transfer learning to authentic contexts?
3. Describe the process of problem-based learning.
4. Using the subject and grade level that you plan to teach, provide an example of PBL. You should create an original example of PBL; do not simply recite the examples provided in the article.
5. Some school board members are concerned that PBL will not lead to increased academic performance. How would you address this concern? What does research suggest about problem-based learning and its impact on student achievement? How do students perceive the PBL instructional strategy?