Entry 1:
Writing: Thinking through the Process

Entry 2:
Building a Classroom Community through Social Studies

Entry 3:
Integrating Mathematics and Science

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Entry 1: Writing: Thinking through the Process

a. Knowledge of Students (KOS)

It is important to show an overall knowledge of students, however, focus on their skills as writers and how you were able to determine their needs as writers.

Overall information can be obtained in the following ways. (Some of this information could be included in the contextual information.)

♦ Use the following sources: QPA Building Profile, building secretary, district office, district publicity information (pamphlets, web sites), other educational professionals, IEPs, parents.

♦ Poll and survey students on non-confidential issues: pre- and post-surveys, interest surveys, learning styles, personalities, color theories, etc.

♦ Perform an internet search on the city where you teach for community data.

♦ Each section below will affect what and how you teach your specific students. Select only the areas below that are specific to your setting and necessary to demonstrate student impact for the lesson explained in the selected portfolio.

• Gender and age
  ▫ Female/male
  ▫ Physical/psychological age (e.g., 8-year-old thinks s/he is 16)

• Community
  ▫ Urban/rural/suburban/exurban
  ▫ Employment opportunities (e.g., school district largest employer, factories, self-employed farmers)
  ▫ Geographical (e.g., environmental influences: ocean, mountain, prairie)
  ▫ Cultural life experiences (e.g., gang-related environment, extended families for generations, level of diversity, access to museums and other institutions)
  ▫ School district profile

• Academic ranges
  ▫ Strengths and weaknesses
  ▫ Honors, advanced placement, prerequisites
  ▫ Reading level/math level/writing level, (e.g., comfort within each, proficiency within each)
• Student interests
  ▫ Art/sports/games/stories/etc.

• Special needs
  ▫ Medications
  ▫ 504 – IEP
  ▫ Para support
  ▫ Emotional level
  ▫ Physical development level
  ▫ ESL/ELL
  ▫ Student life experiences (e.g., foreign/foster/migrant/mobility/military)
  ▫ Gender issues

• Family
  ▫ Economics of household
  ▫ Free and reduced lunch
  ▫ Level of education of parents
  ▫ Structure (e.g., 2 parents/single parent/grandparents/foster/migrant/siblings/lifestyles)
  ▫ Cultural mindset (e.g., Ruby Payne – *Understanding Poverty* [poverty/middle class/wealthy])
  ▫ Level of technology (e.g., understanding, use and access to computers, internet, e-mails)
  ▫ Ethnicity
  ▫ Languages spoken/written in the home

• Cultural issues
  ▫ Religion
  ▫ Holidays/observances

♦ Provide knowledge of students as learners.
  • Tell what the class as a whole has difficulty doing/completing.
  • Explain any special activities you have developed or utilized in your classroom to meet the needs of your particular class (short periods of time, room arrangement, etc.).

♦ Provide knowledge of students as writers.
  • Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the student as a writer. (e.g., needs improvement on forming paragraphs, capitalization, organization, sentence structure, beginnings and endings)
  • Explain how you determined the strengths and weaknesses.
b. Goals/Connections (G/C)

♦ Be sure to connect your goals to the writing assignments/prompts, your instruction, and the students’ needs.

♦ State overall writing goals. For example:
  • Show improvement in certain traits.
  • Publish specific genres.
  • Research a topic and cite sources.
  • Understand a variety of text types.
  • Correctly use the writing process.

♦ Connect the goals to the needs of your students and to your writing assessments/instruction.

c. Assignments/Instruction (A/I)

♦ Use a pretest/diagnostic tool.
  • Explain how you determined the student’s needs, strengths, and weaknesses.
    ◦ Teacher editing
    ◦ Prewriting
    ◦ Class assignment
    ◦ Daily work
    ◦ Journals

♦ Develop specific goals for each lesson (in the unit); know specific connections to student needs.
  • Explain why the lesson activity was a need for that student/group of students. For example:
    ◦ Lack of paragraphing skills
    ◦ Help with stronger beginnings/endings
    ◦ Sentence structure/fluency
    ◦ Organization of the paper
    ◦ Word choice
- Content/ideas
- Self-editing
- Research a topic and select relevant information

- Provide examples of what and how lessons/activities were planned based upon student strengths, weaknesses and interests.
- Tell what the students did.
- Focus on both the class and the two featured students.

d. Content Knowledge/Writing Process (CK/WP)

- Demonstrate your knowledge of your writing curriculum.
- Describe the key elements of your writing curriculum.
  - Required elements (number of published pieces, grammar, 6-Traits, etc.)
- Describe how these key elements fit into how you teach writing/language arts in your classroom.

- Things to consider:
  - Tell if you use writer’s workshop in your classroom. Describe how writer’s workshop looks in your classroom. Explain what is required of the students during writer’s workshop.
  - Tell how many pieces of writing you require your students to publish. Explain how you determine the genre of the papers.
  - Explain your requirements for published pieces.
  - Describe lesson you teach and resources you use.
    - Text books
    - Professional books
    - Class activities
    - Individual activities

e. Personal Expression (PE)

- Describe how students in your classroom use writing to express themselves and to use multiple perspectives.
  - Personal journals
  - Daily writing
  - Individual prompts or story ideas
  - Choice of genres
  - Point of view stories
- Explain what you do to help support your students in their personal expression.
• Comments in daily journals
• Lessons on writing ideas for each person
• Lessons or activities taught on perspective
  ◦ Journal entries as historical people
  ◦ Response journals

f. Thinking Tool (TT)
   ♦ Explain how your students use writing to become higher-level thinkers.
   • Research on a cross curricular topic
   • Letters to editors/administrators
   • Math or science journals
   • Historical journals
   • Friendly letters

g. Analysis (ANA)
   ♦ Include some whole class analysis, but focus mainly on the two featured students.
   ♦ Analyze your students’ work and give examples, such as,
     • Misuse of capitalization or punctuation
     • Patterns of misspelling (specific word blends)
     • Repetitive sentence fluency
     • Paragraphing
     • Too much information
     • Organization
     • Lack of transition
   ♦ Give specific details from the student’s writing pieces.
     • Quote the student’s writing (e.g., “The African Elephant lives in Africa. It eats mostly plants. It weighs 2000 pounds.”).
     • Number each line of the student writing and refer to specific lines (e.g., “As seen in lines 6-9 in Sally’s first draft…”).
     • Point out specific errors (e.g., “Billy’s initial draft read much like a list of facts as opposed to a well researched and organized paper.”).
     • Make comparisons between drafts, e.g., “Sally makes an effort to organize her paragraphs as seen in her 2nd draft…”
     • Show understanding as well as misunderstandings (e.g., “Johnny is showing an emerging understanding of researching and writing using an outline.”).
h. Reflection (R)

♦ Reflect upon your practices. Point out errors, misunderstandings, or ways to improve.

♦ Remember that no matter how good a lesson is, there is always room for improvement.
Entry 2: Building a Classroom Community through Social Studies

a. Knowledge of Students (KOS)
   ♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.
   ♦ Make sure to include any information that would be relevant to building a classroom community.

b. Goals/Connections (G/C)
   ♦ State overall social studies goals.
   ♦ Connect the goals to your students and how you build a community in your classroom.

c. Perspectives (PER)
   ♦ Explain what you do to encourage students to understand perspectives other than their own.
     • Partner/group activities
     • Group dynamics
     • Team building activities
     • Community activities
     • Role play
     • Plays/skits
     • Letters/pen pals
     • Class meetings
     • Community interviews
     • Volunteer projects
     • Peer tutoring

d. Responsibility (RES)
   ♦ Explain what you do in your classroom to encourage your students to take responsibility for their own actions and learning.
     • Individualize learning and rubrics
     • Student-designed activities
     • Think sheets/success plans
     • Group surveys
     • Class meetings
     • Specific lessons or role plays
e. Instruction (INS)

♦ Tell what you did to teach community building.
♦ Explain how you decided upon the lesson based on the student’s needs and interest.
  • Observation through a lesson
  • Student request
  • Curriculum mandated
♦ Describe the unit and specific lesson seen in the video tape.
  • Explain the overall unit of study and where it fits into your curriculum. Try to cross connect it to other curricular areas.
♦ Explain what is being seen in the video.
♦ Describe where in the unit your lesson falls.
  • Explain what happened before the video began and after it finished. Your video is only part of a particular lesson; be sure to describe the rest of the lesson.
  • Explain how the lesson met the goals (overall and individual).

f. Learning Environment (LE)

♦ Explain what you do to make your room a stimulating, safe place for your students.
  • Class meetings
  • Modeling
  • Community building activities
  • The set up of the room
  • Class rules and expectations
♦ Give examples of the students in the video working collaboratively and taking risks.
♦ Point out specific places in the video where the students are having good discussion and listening to each other.

g. Content Knowledge (CK)

♦ Demonstrate your knowledge of your social studies curriculum.
  • Explain the key elements of your social studies curriculum. For example:
    ◦ Regions of the U.S.
    ◦ Ancient civilizations
    ◦ U.S. government
- U.S. history (Revolutionary War, Civil War)
- Explorers
- World history

- Explain your ideas and methods for teaching social studies.
  - Text books and discussions
  - Role plays
  - Class speakers
  - Video history

h. Analysis (ANA)

- Give specific details from the video tape.
  - Quote the students.
  - Point out both the good and bad things that happen during the video (e.g., “It is evident Suzie is confused when she said...”).
  - Give specific examples of when the students are
    - listening and responding
    - thinking critically
    - considering other’s perspectives
    - taking responsibility for their learning

i. Reflection (R)

- Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.
Entry 3: Integrating Mathematics and Science

a. Knowledge of Students (KOS)
   ♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1.

b. Goals/Connections (G/C)
   ♦ State overall science goals.
   ♦ State overall math goals.
   ♦ Connect the goals to your students and your instruction.

c. Interdisciplinary Theme (IT)
   ♦ Explain your science/math connection. Include your “Big Idea.”
   ♦ Explain how you developed the theme.

d. Knowledge of Content (KOC)
   ♦ Demonstrate your knowledge of your science curriculum.
      • Explain the key elements of your science curriculum and “Big Idea.” For example:
         ▫ Formation of cells
         ▫ Human body—digestive system, bones and muscles, circulatory system, etc.
         ▫ Forces—magnetism, electricity, inertia, etc.
         ▫ Outdoor life/food webs/chains
         ▫ Simple machines
         ▫ Physical Science—rocks, minerals, earthquakes, volcanoes, etc.
      • Explain how you integrate math into your science lessons/units. For example:
         ▫ Measurement (weight, length, capacity, etc)
         ▫ Geometry (planes, angles, lines, etc)
         ▫ Division (mitosis, food webs, etc.)

e. Instruction (INS)
   ♦ Explain what the students were asked to do both in the lesson seen in the video and where it fits into the instructions sequence of the unit.
   ♦ Describe your instruction and feedback.
      • Explain what you did to instruct students prior to the video tape. Use textbooks, internet, hands on projects, etc.
      • Describe the feedback you gave students both during and after the lesson. For example:
         ▫ Prompted the students with needed questions during the lesson. (Use only when needed.)
         ▫ Gave written feedback on the students proposal for an experiment prior to beginning the experiment.
♦ Explain how technology was incorporated. It must be appropriate and beneficial to the lesson.
  • Examples of technology:
    ▫ Digital camera
    ▫ Scale
    ▫ Magnifying glass
    ▫ Computer
    ▫ Stop watch
    ▫ Stethoscope

f. Learning Environment (LE)
   ♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 2.

g. Assessment (ASMT)
   ♦ Explain what form of assessment you used. Be sure it includes your learning goals. For example:
     • Teacher observations and feedback as it was happening
     • Student generated rubric
   ♦ Describe what you did to enhance classroom instruction based upon what you learned from your assessment.

h. Multiple Paths (MP)
   ♦ Describe the multiple learning paths your students used during the lesson and unit.
     • Hands on
     • Research
     • Reading
     • Experimenting

i. Analysis (ANA)
   ♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 2.

j. Reflection (R)
   ♦ Refer to suggestions provided in Entry 1 and Entry 2.