

Analysis of Student Work (ASW)

EDEL 311

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Abstract

My practicum experience at _____Elementary School has been a very memorable and educational experience. During my time there, I was introduced to a student named Charlotte. Charlotte is in the 4th grade and loves to smile. When asked about her, my mentor informed me that she is trying to get Charlotte tested for a disability. Upon working with her I can understand why my mentor wants to get her tested. During my 3 lessons, there were times when she did not understand what she was supposed to do and as a result, did not finish the work on time. However, a little intervention went a long way with her. Regardless of her grades, Charlotte does everything she is supposed to with a smile and a positive attitude. This experience has opened my eyes and has made me rethink how I can reteach a lesson if I need to. Learning about these strategies has helped me in this class and I hope I use this process in the future.

Student Data

My student is named Charlotte. She is in 4th grade in my mentor's classroom. She is a native English speaker and achieves lower than the average student. When asked, my mentor says that she may be tested for a disability because of her scores. She is a hard worker and will do anything that is asked of her with a smile.

Lesson 1

My first lesson was a review of a play in their school books called "Red Writing Hood." In this lesson, the students would review the play and then quiz each other on the play using a questions worksheet and a paper fortune teller. In this lesson, they were asked write out 4 questions on their own, along with 4 that were already written and go around quizzing each other with the fortune teller for as long as time permitted. At the end of the lesson, the class would come back together and answer some questions as a class.

Student performance

Charlotte was a bit confused on writing her own questions because she did not know what to ask about. When looking at her paper, I could see that she had some questions but for others, it seemed that she did not quite understand what happened in the story.

Initial teaching strategy

For this lesson I mainly used the Lemov strategy "stretching" for her because understood for the most part what had happened in the story, but could not think of anything else to write for her last 2 questions. I asked questions like, "What did the FBI agents do?" and "Why do you think they did that?" I think after stretching the questions she was able to finish her worksheet.

Re-teaching strategies

Some strategies I think I could have used are “double plan,” “plan for error,” and “excavate error.” Double planning is “planning what students will be doing at each point in class” (Lemov, 2015, p. 143). I think if I used double plan, I could have helped her more with the lesson because I did not pace the lesson too well and while others were finishing up their questions and moving on to their fortune tellers, Charlotte was still trying to fill in her last 2 questions. Another strategy is plan for error which is to “Increase the likelihood that you’ll recognize and respond to errors by planning for common mistakes in advance” (Lemov, 2015, 60). I also could have planned for error and expected that she would struggle with and tried to help her but because I didn’t plan too well, I did not know if I had the time to help her. Finally, excavating the error is to “Dig into errors, studying them efficiently and effectively, to better understand where students struggle and how you can best address those points” (Lemov, 2015, p.72). I think excavating the error could work because figuring out her errors and why she made them would help me better understand what she was thinking and to help her using her train of thought.

Strategy chosen

I thought the best strategy to use in this case was the excavating the error because I think that looking at the problem from her perspective would benefit her much better than telling her the answer or to point out all her errors. Although pacing the lesson like in “double planning” is important, I don’t think it would have helped her as much. Planning for error may have been more help, however, compared to finding the source of the error instead of planning for possible

errors, I thought she would benefit more from fixing the source rather than just planning for what error might occur.

Re-teaching with new strategy

When I worked with her on her questions, I wanted to see where she was getting stuck and why she could not remember enough information to write her last 2 questions. When asking her about the characters and what they did, I realized that there were a lot of characters who did different things in the story and it was hard for her to remember. I read through her questions and asked about different characters she had not yet mentioned. After reminding her about the other characters, she seemed to get new ideas and started to write, but unfortunately, she did not have enough time to write her questions. I think this strategy helped me see where she was falling behind and it helped me to remind her of the different characters in the story. Unfortunately, she ran out of time to write out the rest of her questions.

Reflection

I think if I had more time to work with her I would be able to help her with her questions. As mentioned before, she had forgotten about other characters that did not have a big role in the story. I think that digging deeper and asking the right questions would help her think about the remaining characters and then she would be able to write her questions and know the answers to them. She still made some good progress with the other questions, but the other two questions were preventing her from fully participating in the quiz-quiz-trade activity.

Lesson 2

My second lesson was an extension of the class research project. Each student chose a country that interested them and they had to research and prepare a report and a presentation for that country. My lesson was utilizing what they learned in order write a letter to their class from an imaginary trip to their country. They were required to use a graphic organizer and use at least 2 facts about the location, the people or culture, and the landmarks. I would then provide lined paper for them to write their letter. I first began with reading a story about two cousins writing a letter to show them examples of what I wanted, as well as a non-fiction book to model using facts about their country and putting them into a letter.

Student performance

Charlotte was already familiar with the idea of finding information and writing about it. When she was given the graphic organizer to write her facts, she was done fairly quickly because she already had her facts about Chile in front of her. She finished the required 2 facts per section of the organizer and then started her letter. The letter was filled with facts and was well written but she did not write in the perspective of writing to somebody. All of her sentences where recalled facts and it started to sound like a report rather than a letter to her friends and classmates.

Initial strategy

My first initial strategy to help Charlotte was “stretch it.” This strategy is to “Reward answers with harder questions” (Lemov, 2015, p. 108). This seemed to help her with finding the information she wanted to incorporate into her letter however, when checking on her progress, she was writing her letter like a report instead of her experiencing the sites and landmarks of her

country. She seemed to understand applying the information, but in the end she was only recalling facts and copying them from her organizer to her letter.

Re-teaching strategies

The three strategies I thought I could use for this lesson were “show call,” “art of the sentence,” and “change the pace.” Show call is “creating a strong incentive to complete writing with quality and thoughtfulness by publicly showcasing and revising student writing—regardless of who volunteers to share” (Lemov, 2015, p. 290). I thought this could help her in writing in the way I wanted because showcasing someone’s writing and giving them praise always works when your students want to do well. This gives them a powerful incentive to make sure that they are doing what you want them to do. Second is art of the sentence. This is where you “Ask students to synthesize a complex idea in a single, well-crafted sentence. The discipline of having to make one sentence do all the work pushes students to use new syntactical forms” (Lemov, 2015, p. 285). I think this would work great because summarizing everything into one sentence helps students focus on what they need to accomplish and once they figure that objective out, they can focus more on what needs to be done. Finally, there is “change the pace.” This strategy is where you “Establish a productive pace in your classroom. Create ‘fast’ or ‘slow’ moments in a lesson by shifting activity types or formats” (Lemov, 2015, p. 201). This strategy is beneficial because when giving a set amount of time, you prevent students from getting bored but at the same time, you put a certain amount of pressure to get things done on time.

Strategy chosen

The strategy I picked was change the pace. I chose this strategy because I felt like Charlotte needed more time to fill out her graphic organizer and write her letter. I told her that

she only had a couple of minutes left and then she had to work on her letter. This extra push helped her put her ideas down on the organizer and she began to write her letter.

Re-teaching with new strategy

I decided to add a little push to her work by constantly reminding her that she needed to write her letter so she could share it with the class. I decided to put a time limit on her graphic organizer so she wouldn't get caught up in writing facts for the entire lesson. This seemed to work because she began to write her letter on the last leg of the lesson. She also managed to get about halfway through her letter by the time I asked the class to share what they had written. Overall, I think that changing the pace worked because it gave her that extra drive to finish in time.

Reflection

After changing the pace a little and giving her that extra push to get started on her letter, it seemed to give her more incentive to get this done. However, after constantly reminding her that this was a letter to her classmates and not a report, she still seemed to write facts about her country. She still applied what she learned about her country but did not have the right audience in mind. The extra push somewhat backfired on me because she was so focused on getting it done that it was not quite what I wanted in her letter. On the other hand though, the purpose of my lesson was to apply what they had learned about their country to a letter and to an extent she did do that.

Lesson 3

My final lesson was a social studies lesson from their classroom book “Nevada Our Home.” In this lesson, I reviewed what they had learned in the previous week about Nevada pioneers and the hardships they went through traveling. Once I heard some responses I read some excerpts from the book “You Wouldn’t Want to be an American Pioneer” to get them engaged. Finally, I gathered everyone to the carpet to watch a video and go over the new and old vocabulary. I then handed out a worksheet and instructed the students to partner up and read the chapter and answer the worksheet questions. If they finished early, they also had a vocabulary matching game to play. Unfortunately the video would not work so I backed it up with a thorough review of the old vocabulary words and then explaining the new words. I think this actually helped the students retain the new information without sacrificing the older material that they needed later in the card game.

Student performance

Charlotte is not the fastest reader and I think that played a huge role in her not finishing her work. She spent most of her class time reading the pages without even looking at the worksheet. She was only able to finish her worksheet after her teacher had switched classes. However, the next day I saw she had finished most of the questions, but upon closer inspection, she had not completed some of the sentences. She only completed one question fully, the rest looked like they were missing one or two words almost like she had an incomplete thought.

Initial strategy

My original teaching strategy for helping her was “show me” but it was mainly for recalling facts as she read. She doesn’t answer questions as she reads, she waits until she is finished reading before looking at the worksheet. This strategy did not really work in this case

because she was taking a very long time to read and since she was already behind the rest of the class I thought it would not be a good idea to stop her and have her explain what she had read.

Re-teaching strategies

The three strategies I thought would help would be “control the game,” “brighten lines,” and “work the clock.” Control the game means “Ask students to read aloud frequently, but manage the process to ensure expressiveness, accountability, and engagement” (Lemov, 2015, p.172). I thought this strategy could work because if they read aloud during the lesson, they will be more engaged in the material. Brighten lines is to “Ensure that changes in activities and other mileposts are perceived clearly by making beginnings and endings of activities visible and crisp” (Lemov, 2015, p.211). I thought this strategy could work because if I have students focus more on the beginnings and the outcomes, then they can focus on what needs to be done and they won’t be so distracted to do so. Finally there is work the clock. This strategy is to “Measure time...intentionally, strategically, and often visibly to shape your and your students’ experience in the classroom” (Lemov, 2015, p.220). I think that manipulating the time given to students can help drive them to get the assignment done on time.

Strategy chosen

I chose to use work the clock. I thought this would work best because Charlotte may not be the best reader but having that extra push could help her get the assignment done. If I reminded her that time was running out, it could push her to finish up because she always wants to do her best. I also think that having a set amount of time for each segment could help the partners work together. Either by having them read a page at a time or having one read while one

answers the questions. Overall, I think that giving a set time limit is an incentive to get things done on time so they can move on to the next activity.

Re-teaching with new strategy

I constantly reminded her that she needed to finish before she had to switch classes and that seemed to work for a bit. She finished reading the chapter by the time the lesson had to end and was not able to get to the worksheet. It seemed to help her reading a little however, she had already established to take turns reading with her partner. As Charlotte's turn to read came up, it slowed both of them down and as a result, they did not finish the worksheet. I think that if I had more time in the lesson than having to worry about the classes switching, Charlotte would have made better progress.

Reflection

I believe that manipulating the time limit definitely helps students get their work done with little interruption. However, I also think that if students need more time to finish, they should have more time. I later found out after my initial lesson, Charlotte finished most of the questions in her spare time. She had a few incomplete sentences but overall it seemed that she just needed more time to read the chapter, then the worksheet, and re-read to find the answers. I was quite surprised to see that she still managed to get most of the worksheet done even though she was not reading fast enough to catch up with the rest of the class. Perhaps in the future, I can give student's more time to work on assignments after the initial lesson because sometimes things like switching classes can get in the way of students getting work done, and a teacher cannot change class schedules.

Future Application of ASW process

I hope to use what I have learned in my practicum 2 classes, my student teaching, and well into my career as a teacher. I think that getting to know your students and observing how they react to lessons is extremely important. This process helps me see that not every student learns in the exact same way as others and that a teacher needs to be flexible with their teaching strategies. I hope to use this method to help students who have not yet made a connection to the material. The strategies I have used and learned about help me see that re-teaching can be as simple as showing the teacher what you learned or using incentive to drive your students forward. I believe this method will help me know my students and what they are capable of. This process also shows me where I can improve in my lessons. Having back up strategies really helps because this way, you are more prepared to re-teach instead of simply repeating the strategy that did not work the first time. I hope to use this method in the future in order to make sure all my students are learning and making their own connections with the material I teach. This experience has really helped me in preparing for when I have my own classroom. Not every lesson will make sense. It is my job to make sure I choose the right method so that the lesson will stick. I know it will be a nerve racking experience when I find out that my lessons are not reaching a student, but using this process, I am less afraid to think about the strategy I used and try again with a new one. Every student deserves to have a teacher who works hard to make sure they learn. This process brings me one step closer to being that teacher.

Philosophy to teach and re-teach

Teaching is not about using one right method. Every student is unique and therefore one teaching method may not work for all students. Each student has different learning strategies that help them make their own connections to the material. It is very important that a teacher gets to know their students and finds out what works best for them. It is also important to find a new

method in case one does not work. Not every lesson will go smoothly so it is important to re-teach when necessary, whether it is one student or the whole class. I believe it is a teacher's job to teach and make sure that the students understand the material in front of them. This means that if one method does not work, then a teacher must find a method that does work. If a teacher teaches using only one method and a student doesn't understand, the teacher shouldn't brush it off. Teaching is not about "it's my way or the highway," it is making sure that your students are making their own connections and thinking about the material in a way that makes sense to them. I think that as long as you are teaching, it is your job to ensure that your students learn, no matter how long it takes or what method is used. Students depend on the teacher, so if a student does not understand, the teacher is the first to turn to. I believe that every student has the ability to learn and do great things; they just need the right guidance. I want to show my students that I will support them in any way I can. If that means using different methods until something works, so be it. It is my job to make sure my students leave my classroom knowing everything they need to in order to prepare them for the future. I want them to learn and retain information. I do not mind teaching and re-teaching in the slightest. It is just another task that a teacher signs up for.

This experience has opened my eyes to how I can reteach. I found that a little intervention can go a long way for a student who does not understand. I find that these strategies are very useful and I hope to learn about more in the future. I also found it rewarding to help a student and to see their face when they connect to the material. In Charlotte's case, she was so happy when I told her good job. She gave me the brightest smile and that was all I needed to ensure myself that re-teaching is just another part of a teacher's job and it is very rewarding. I am glad I learned about this process and I hope I can build my skills to help other students like Charlotte learn and make connections. I believe that making sure students learn is the primary

job of a teacher. If they don't understand, then it is the teacher's responsibility use a different strategy to ensure that the students understand it in their own terms.

Work Cited

Lemov, D. (2015). *Teach like a champion 2.0: 62 techniques that put students on the path to college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.