

Student Name and Number: Ljiljana (Lilliana) Stojanoski
S416088

Program of Study: Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary)
ED25

Unit Code and Title: CR402 Curriculum and Pedagogy: Teaching
Area B

Lecturer: Mr Richard Leo

Assignment Title: Assessment Task 2 – Reflection

Due Date: 23.09.2016

Word Count: 1900

1.0 Introduction

In order to teach effectively, teachers must plan effectively. This can be planning of units, lessons, activities or anything that leads the students in the direction of achieving the planned learning outcomes. Reflection too is an important ingredient in the recipe for successful teaching as it provides opportunities for a meaningful retrospective look at the practice.

Using the 5 Rs framework, this reflective essay will provide an overview of the unit plan titled 'Out and About', designed for Year 11 graphics class that have a task to develop a tourist map to promote a local region.

The unit plan was developed for a co-educational state school located in the urban area of Brisbane. The school is located close to the city's CBD and the popular tourist and cultural precinct of South Bank, is close to the suburb of West End which provides its own socio-cultural influences and is a multicultural school with students from middle to upper social class. These factors play an important role in selecting the topic of study as majority of students are familiar with tourism, travel and the related social processes.

2.0 Reporting

Graphics forms a part of the Design and Technologies Key Learning Area (KLA), is centred on the Problem Based Learning (PBL) framework and utilises inquiry based learning. The learning in this KLA always begins with an identified problem. As the students are required to develop a tourist map to promote a local region, the unit focuses on teaching the students the key principles and guidelines of both graphic and map design and the skills in the areas of drawing and graphical representations. The students will also develop problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, project management and the communication skills throughout this learning experience. This is a 6 weeks long unit and consists of 5 lessons per week in combination of double and single periods. By the end of this unit of study, the students will be able to: identify design criteria and comprehend graphical principles, resolve design problems using design factors, procedures and conventions. The students will:

KNOW – the key principles and elements of both map and graphic design and their correct application in order to achieve an appropriate visual communication,

DO – identify and apply features of 'good' and 'aesthetically pleasing' design; develop, an effective map that responds to the design brief and target audience requirements, apply sustainability considerations and evaluate and justify their designed solutions,

VALUE – appreciate the value of an effective visual communication that responds to the needs of the community and value the technological processes involved in creating designed solutions.

Cross Curricular priority addressed in the unit is sustainability while the general capabilities addressed are KLA specific literacy, numeracy and ICT, critical and creative thinking and personal and social capability. Literacies are addressed through comprehending texts by reading and viewing, interpretation and analysis of learning area texts, composing texts through writing and creating, understand learning area vocabulary and visual knowledge (understand how visual elements create meaning). These will be evident through both the map design and the report. Numeracies skills are developed through using spatial reasoning including shapes, patterns and associated relationships, evident in the map design. ICT skills of generating solutions and operating technologies will be developed mostly through the assessment task.

3.0 Responding

This unit responds to the syllabus guidelines and the accredited work program by creating opportunities for the students to learn and understand the associated key elements and principles of design and apply the skills of graphical drawings. It also creates an occasion for the students to: learn the ways of interpreting the client's brief and understand and interpret the needs of target audiences. In addition, the students will practice the skills of appropriate application of symbols and pictograms and their importance in navigating through a region, particularly for international visitors. Through this unit the students are also given an opportunity to investigate the aspects of sustainability and impact of cultural diversity on their design.

The Aspects of these are evident in week 1, lessons 3 to 5, discussion EQ2, activity 6 whereby the students are required to begin developing their ideas based on the brief and target audience needs interpretations. Students will recall and use the knowledge they have been exposed to to create strings (through in-class practice) and develop ideas and propositions (Hattie & Yates, 2014). They will also begin their concept drawings and planning how to organise their map for ease of visual communication. During this stage of work students will develop a checklist containing the brief and target audience requirements and keep referring to it as they develop their concept drawings. The question is, how well would the students be able to manage all the requirements and how much help and reminding would they require? I would provide an electronic and a hard copy template of the list for the students, guide those who need it in identifying and recording the requirements and help them develop a timeline for better project management. Eventually, they would start managing on their

own and once they start developing the concept plans and applying the technical understanding, their ideas will become unified.

4.0 Relating

Based on the assessment task, I felt the learning outcomes need to be in the area of learning the key elements and principles of graphic and map design, such as recognising and learning, understanding and applying and creating and evaluating. These are simple, achievable and intellectually challenging learning milestones. I felt the best way to achieve these outcomes is by scaffolding the student learning by the means of providing the printed resources and the visual aid as well as giving an opportunity to practice through experiencing the use of a map and sketching one.

The acquiring of the student knowledge starts with sensory recognitions, develops into strings, ideas, and then schematas. For example, students will experience the topic of study through the visual memory (on-line and hard copy maps) and tactile judgement (hard copies and the use of a map), evident in the week 1 lessons. As students begin to associate these orderings and start deliberately focusing on the key elements (new knowledge), they rehearse the sequences of the elements and how they work together in creating the designed outcome (evident in week 1 and some week 2 lessons). As students make links between the concepts and meanings, the ideas are created. This is evident in week two activities whereby students interpret the requirements and represent them on their sketches by using the identified key elements and principles (Hattie & Yates, 2014). Schematas are then developed as the knowledge becomes organised and developed into frames to make sense out of those combinations of ideas and knowledge. Although schematas can take years to develop, the schematas I am explaining in this context refer to the basic structure or frame within which students put their newly acquired knowledge together with the interpreted needs to create their maps by the means of the principles of design. The learning outcomes are directly aligned with these constructs of knowledge. They are prompted by the key questions and guided by the class discussions, elaborations and experimentation. Students' knowledge is then assessed on the basis of the specified dimensions for this course of study: knowledge and understanding, analysing and applying and synthesising and evaluating.

5.0 Reasoning

Factors such as the stage of the students' cognitive, emotional, social and physical growth, have an influence on the learning experiences developed in this unit plan. Teaching secondary school students means teaching adolescents. Experts believe that the best way to teach and relate to adolescents learners is by attending to

the 'human' and not just the intellectual needs. Therefore, the teaching must be adolescent driven, adolescent focused and adolescent specific (Rumble, 2014). Pendergast states that adolescence is marked by both the biological and psychological developmental 'events' and the social and cultural 'mental constructions' (Pendergast, 2010). While the two 'events' mostly affect the behavioural aspects, the mental constructions refer to the natural maturation of the brain which in turn affects the students' learning (Piaget as cited in Pendergast, 2010). Basically, this means that older adolescents (senior secondary) are capable of performing formal operations thus "...exhibiting a capacity for abstract logic and more mature....reasoning" (Pendergast, 2010, p. 60). According to the Piaget, these formal operations are: metacognition, combinational and thinking beyond reality and logical and hypothetical reasoning. This theory is relevant to the unit plan in the following way: students are capable of abstraction which is used in the design development processes, they can think on less literal and more conceptual levels (map/design conceptualisation) and they can reason on both logical and hypothetical levels which is required in the area of interpreting the brief and the needs of target audience. As the development of metacognition processes is higher, students are asked to reflect on their map design considering all of the requirements, and their own design choices.

For their assessment task, students will, apart from creating an annotated concept sketch of their map, write a justification identifying: the reasons for their specific design, evaluate its effectiveness in terms of the visual communication and consideration of sustainability and cultural influences. Apart from this, the unit of study and the assessment task are authentic, relevant and show connection to the 'real world' as all students have either travelled or know someone who has, have relied on maps and instructions or even information kiosks at shopping centres etc.

6.0 Reconstructing

I have approached the design of this unit plan from the perspective of productive pedagogies (Newman, 1996 as cited in Groundwater-Smith, Brennan, McFadden, Mitchell & Munns, 2009) in the following way:

- Through the class activities and learning experiences (see Unit Plan) I have placed the learner at the centre of their learning and have used pedagogical strategies and discussions to promote depth of understanding - evident in the learning of principles and elements, higher order thinking and critical analysis of design processes

- I have made connections between what students can experience at school within this unit, with their 'lives outside of school'
- I have provided opportunities for the links to be made between the curriculum content and the 'real life/world' problems
- I have promoted positive and supportive classroom environment evident in class activities and student/teacher negotiated elements and
- Encouraged an inclusive learning 'community' within the classroom evident in the student exposure to the concept of cultural diversity element in their design.

Overall, I am satisfied with the amount of knowledge and understanding the students will be able to gain as they participate in this unit of study. I am confident that students will be able to understand and appreciate the visual communication created by the means of graphic design and connect this with real life situations. However, I do realise that I have focused my unit on the content learning more that I would have liked. However, I strongly believe that education is not merely about passing on of knowledge and expecting the students to 'parrot off' the content but about the transfer of knowledge to other areas of life, developing problem-solving skills, critical thinking and similar. Egan (as cited in Groundwater-Smith et al., 2009, p. 128) writes "...if teacher thinks of...unit as more like telling a good story then conveying a body of information....then the...focus on how to tell the story as crisply and as vividly as possible comes to the fore." This statement helped me reconsider my teaching methods and inspired me to change how I should teach. Although direct teaching must and always will have its place in my unit and lesson plans, instead of being the information conveyor with a few engaging activities, I will endeavour to become an engaging story teller who, when needed, directly teaches and instructs too.

“References”

- Brady, L. & Kennedy, K. (2010). *Curriculum Construction (4th ed.)*. Australia: Pearson.
- Brooks, J., & Brooks, M. (1993). *In Search of Understanding: The Case for Constructivist Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA.
- Brown, A. & Campione, J. (1994). *Guided discovery in a community of learners*. In K. McGilly (Ed.), *Classroom lessons: Integrating cognitive theory and classroom practice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press/Bradford Books
- Goundwater-Smith, S., Brennan, M., McFadden, M., Mitchell, J. & Munns, G. (2009). *Secondary Schooling in a Changing World*. Melbourne: Cengage Learning Australia
- Hattie, J. & Yates, G. (2014). *Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn*. London: Routledge.
- Mills, K. A. (2011). *The Multiliteracies Classroom: New Perspectives on Language Education*. Salisbury, UK: Short Run Press.
- Pendergast, D. & Bahr, N. (2010). *Teaching Middle Years (2nd ed.)*. NSW, AU: Allen & Unwin.
- Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. (2015). *Design and Technologies Syllabus*. Retrieved 20 August 2016 from <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/aciq/p-10-technologies/year-8-technologies>
- Rumble, P. (2014). *In Search of the Middle School Teacher*. Germany: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.
- www.enhancinged.wgbh.org. (2002). *Enhancing Education: The 5E's*. Retrieved from <http://enhancinged.wgbh.org/research/eeeeee.html>