

The evidence I chose for this standard is an assignment on differentiated lessons that was co-developed with three of my peers. The purpose of this assignment was to create a case study of a student and develop six different lessons that are adapted to suit the needs of the student. It is important to note that the case study was made up and is not based on a real student. All of the lessons needed to be focused on one concept. Although the case study was not of a real student, it very well could be a student I encounter in my future practice. While I created this assignment, I learned that with a bit of creativity, teachers can adapt their lessons to suit the needs of everyone. For students who seem to struggle in class, such as Alex from the case study, it is important to learn as much about the student as possible. Background information can reveal a lot, and lessons can then be tailored to suit the needs of the student.

While working on the different lesson plans that were adapted to help motivate Alex and to get him more involved with his classmates, I came to realize that I really value collaborative work in the classroom. I think there tends to be less collaborative work in classrooms now because it can sometimes become hectic. Children need to make connections with each other and learn how to interact and cooperate. One strength of my evidence piece is that it shows that I take individual differences into consideration and that I am able to plan teaching a concept in a variety of different ways.

My evidence piece relates to Vygotsky and Maslow's theories. Vygotsky states that "cognitive development stems from social interactions" (McLeod, 2014, para.7). Since the case study outlines how Alex is having difficulty connecting with others due to being new to the school, in addition to not getting along with his siblings, focusing lessons on small

group work may help him make connections with his new classmates. This evidence piece also relates to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) in that Alex may not have his fundamental needs met. If Alex does not feel safe at school or at home, his need for love and belonging and safety are not being met. Therefore, his esteem needs, such as his sense of accomplishment is not something that he will focus on until his other needs are met first.

When educators are knowledgeable about how children develop as learners and as social beings, they are able to plan their curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom management around their specific group of students. Without the knowledge of what stage of development learners are in, it can really disrupt the delivery and content of lessons. There would be no understanding of what concepts students are even able to comprehend. As I grow as a teacher, I plan to further my knowledge of child development so that I can apply it to my work. In addition, I will make every effort to make strong connections with my future students so I can understand their individual differences and needs. I also think it is important to collaborate with parents in order to get a complete picture of each student. For example, knowing that Alex's parents are in the process of separating tells us that his mind is likely more focused on his home life than what is happening at school.

Standard three relates to improving knowledge of child development and personal differences that ultimately influence curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom management. The more we understand what stage of development students are in, the better teachers are able to deliver the curriculum based on the capacity of the students. In the lesson plans I co-developed, we took into account his lack of interpersonal relationships and

lack of motivation. By incorporating elements of group work and topics of family and self, we believe that Alex would become more engaged in his school work.

References

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