**Courageous Characters:**

**With an emphasis on Characteristics**

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**Evaluation Document**

I was not able to complete all of my lessons. The work I missed was the writing assessment, where the students were to type their work in to MyAccess and receive a 4.0 or better. However, I did assess their knowledge on reading, with a quiz from President Gorver Cleveland, Where are You?. I am also not going to do the compare and contrast of the other story- Card Carrying Collectors. I felt that it would be too much for my class, as low as they are, I felt that it would be a bombarding of information if they were to try and balance a concept or Courageous Characters and Cause and Effect for more than one story at a time. I think my students would have really enjoyed writing, however, I am content having not taught the remaining portion of the cause and effect/ compare and contrast lesson.

Unit: Courageous Characters

Day 1: For the first lesson, or day 1, I introduced what a character trait is and what character emotions are. We went over the list of words and the students were to star any word they may not know. If they knew all the words I wanted to them to find 3 words in the list that they could use more often. Every student was to put 3 words on a post it note, either of words they knew and needed to use more, or of words they didn’t know, and they put it on our “Ticket out the door” poster.

Day 2: On day two they used the same word list that was given to them the day before, and we all went down to the Media center. What they did was went to [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net) and create their own wordle. Any word that they may not have known the day before they could google and find out the definition of the word. They had a lot of fun creating wordles, but the most important thing was their eyes were opened to all of the words that do and don’t represent them.

Day 3: Today we started integrating information. I used articles about Cubes(math), Holidays and Memories (Social Studies), Insects and Moths (Science). I gave the articles to students based on their reading level and skills. They first were to read the article to themselves and highlight any character trait about the article they could find. If they needed to, they could use their trait list as a cheat sheet for help. Once they had their character traits highlighted, they got together as a group and discussed the character traits in each article. Once groups were done discussing the traits of their article, we all met back together as a group and went over the traits for each group. The good thing is, that every group got to hear other groups’ traits and how they were all different, but still traits describing the articles.

Day 4: Mrs. Tuckfield and I both taught an awesome lesson on Cause and Effect. Although the students know what cause and effect are because we went over it briefly at the beginning of the year, it was great for them to get concrete examples of the work. I had them pull out their composition notebook and take notes on what a cause and effect are. Then Mrs. Tuckfield showed a fun PowerPoint on examples of Cause and Effect. After we felt that they knew what cause and effect were and how to identify both, they did a cause and effect homework assignment. The students really excelled in both.

Day 5: Cause and effect Quiz- the students did great. Once we were done assessing our cause and effect skills and correct them, I had the students get the Mirrors and Windows basal book and turn to *President Cleveland, Where are You?*. I had them use a T-Chart that had Cause on one side and Effect on the other, I told them that we were going to read the story and pull out Cause and Effects in the story- there were a lot because it is about a boy that is making every day decisions, while also building his character.

Day 6: Finish *President Cleveland, Where Are You* and then take a quiz for the story.

         Learner reaction

o   What was the learners’ reaction to your thematic unit?

  What did they like?

The students really liked the Wordle, they loved not only using the computer, but playing around with the different characteristics of themselves, while being artistic. Although we were not able to do the writing assessment on the back, they understood what a characteristic was and they can have more than one characteristic as a person. Also, the students really grabbed on to the story and understood not only the cause and effect side of the information, but they liked the plot of the story and how it built young Jerry’s character to go through the trials he did- even if students do not really collect cards like that anymore and it was set in a different time.

Another part of the lesson I think they really enjoyed was the cause and effect lesson. They are now able to look at a sentence, know if it is a cause and effect sentence, and pick out both the cause and the effect. They enjoyed and understood it to the point that class average was an 80% or better on the assessment quiz.

  What didn’t they like?

Although they did not say it, and 6th graders will, I think that they really didn’t like the integration lesson I planned. The articles were not as interesting to them as they were to me. I think I would have been more successful on this lesson if I would have done 1) more relevant articles to pull the students attention 2) found magazines with similar articles, so that the students could see more visual copies of the information instead of it being on white printer paper and 3) once the articles were read and characteristics were found, they could use some sort of multimedia, like Twitter, to post different characteristics- then show them on the apple TV to go over what characteristics they came up with.

         Meeting objectives

o Students met the 3 objectives that are listed below. We were not able to get to the writing side of the work- the large assessment- so a lot of the objectives were not met. However, the main objectives of the unit, which included exploring character traits and making a connection in a passage, were met.

The objectives that were met are listed below:

* Students will be able to explain how the theme of a text is developed by reading *President Cleveland, Where Are You?.*
* Students will be able to analyze how details and evidence within the text supports what the author states directly and what he/she implies, they will be using a Cause and Effect Graphic Organizer with *President Cleveland, Where Are You?* And discussing other texts in class.
* Students will be able to use reading skills such as analyzing cause and effect, they will be tested on Cause and Effect through a quiz: reaching an 80% or better will be considered as goal being met.

         Evaluation from the perspective of the facilitator

* From the instructor’s perspective, what worked and what didn’t?

What worked: I really like the lessons that we taught on character traits and on Cause and Effect. Both are concepts that students can integrate with everything they work with in school. They are now able to look at a sentence, know if it is a cause and effect sentence, and pick out both the cause and the effect. They enjoyed and understood it to the point that class average was an 80% or better on the assessment quiz.

Another part of the unit that worked is the reading portion. We split the class in half- not specified by learning skills- half went to Mrs. Tuckfield’s class and half stayed in my room. Then as smaller groups we read President Cleveland, Where are You? Although the groups were even in skill, it was easier for the students to learn on a smaller group level. We read the story, stopped for comprehension, and filled out our cause and effect graphic organizer. This helped students see the effect that can come from making decisions, at any age.

What didn’t work: I did not like the integration aspects that I chose. On a regular basis I integrate, but for some reason I over thought the lesson and didn’t interest the kids in the midst of over thinking it. Although they did not say it, and 6th graders will, I think that they really didn’t like the integration lesson I planned. The articles were not as interesting to them as they were to me.

* What would you change?

I think that when I integrate, I would find magazines for groups to look through and find character traits and make a collage. The integration would be based on the different magazines. (i.e. Social Studies, Math, and Science). I think I would have been more successful on this lesson if I would have done 1) more relevant articles to pull the students attention 2) found magazines with similar articles, so that the students could see more visual copies of the information instead of it being on white printer paper and 3) once the articles were read and characteristics were found, they could use some sort of multimedia, like Twitter, to post different characteristics- then show them on the apple TV to go over what characteristics they came up with. That way, when I integrate the information that I not only needed to, but should do, I interest them on a new level and that is through the social media that they are familiar with.

Another idea that I had is to find books on the topics I found on Math (Cubes), Social Studies (Holidays), and Science (Insects), and have them read a specific chapter that talks about the characteristics of those topics- I could even find better more detailed books, then they would be able to compare and see the similarities to the character traits they learned a few lessons before. I could possibly even incorporate a compare and contrast- have them switch books and do a compare and contrast between 1 book’s/ stories characteristics compared to another.

         Evaluation of the materials or technology

* Were the materials or technologies effective and appropriate?
  + The worlde program was perfect for the students. They loved being able to experiment with the program and I know that a few students even went home and did their own wordle.
  + We implemented a new PowerPoint that wasn’t really mentioned in the lesson, however, I did include it on the website. Mrs. Tuckfield found a great PowerPoint that was interactive with the students choosing which part of a sentence was the cause or the effect. I find that students want to participate more when they can volunteer, interactively choose the answer, and find out how well they did on their guess.
* What worked and what didn’t?

What worked: Every part of each lesson that I used something simple like an ipad or my computer, it worked like it was supposed to. The Powerpoints functioned as they were supposed to and the computers the students used for Wordle were very effective.

What didn’t work: The only materials that didn’t work were the articles that I mentioned before. I feel that I could have doe a better job to choose something for them to read that was not only integrated but they could relate to.

* What would you change?

I think I would have been more successful on this lesson if I would have done 1) more relevant articles to pull the students attention 2) found magazines with similar articles, so that the students could see more visual copies of the information instead of it being on white printer paper and 3) once the articles were read and characteristics were found, they could use some sort of multimedia, like Twitter, to post different characteristics- then show them on the apple TV to go over what characteristics they came up with.

If I were to use twitter I could have used the chromebooks or The students could have paired up and used one of the ipods we have from the Sped department. I could even have 1 account and give all the students the log in, so there is no inappropriate or unsafe activity going on with the Twitter account.

         Evaluation of the environment (room size, arrangement)

* Could the teaching space be modified in any way to improve instruction?

I think the Media Center for the computers were conducive to our needs. And the classroom is a familiar location, so the students know they can learn, act, and feel comfortable in there. I also like that my classroom is enclosed, so if noise does increase other teachers cannot really see it. It also helped that Mrs. Tuckfields room is down the hall, so we can use that as a 2nd learning location for the students.

* What would you change?

Obviously, from thinking in the standpoint of the perfect learning environment, I would love a larger classroom so that we could better suit the needs of small groups. However, it is a Middle School, so the classrooms are naturally going to be a little smaller and there is going to be less room for group work.

         Continuity and conformity of implementation with the design plan

* What changes would you make to the design plan to make this unit more effective?

I think, even though my students are low, we can move along faster than we were. Sometimes we move too quickly and sometimes I underestimate how much the students can handle. This is a situation where I underestimated them. I think we could have done the Cause and Effect lesson, homework, and even the quiz in one day.

As I mentioned before, I did not like how I integrated all of the information from Social Studies, Math, and Science. I think I could have done a better job to suit the interest for the students so they would feel the information was relevant and interesting enough to hold their attention.

The final thing I think I should have done was implement more technology. These kids are so technologically savvy, so if I would have given them the opportunity to use ipads, their phones, ipods, or even the chrome books, they could have really created, found, or presented something really great on character traits.

Overall, I think this was beneficial for my students and me. They were able to learn the starting lessons and points to the courageous character unit, but it was great for me because it helped me evaluate my development model as a teacher. There were a few parts of the ADDIE model I didn’t like, but overall it was a great thematic unit.