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EDUC 450

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September 19, 2019

MTV Reflection: Strategy: Sign, Symbol, Image

I think my lesson was effective because I explained what the strategy was in clear terms, I provided an example of how it could be used, and I gave the class time to practice the strategy and reflect upon their explorations in small groups. I enjoyed hearing the different interpretations of the poem from my classmates and assigning students to work in small groups is a great way to get everyone to participate without the pressure of speaking in front of the entire class. One benefit of my graphic design coursework is that I am aware of how much white space to leave in a visual presentation, so the information is not too cluttered. In art education there are many opportunities to incorporate literacy strategies into my curriculum and we constantly strive to point out the big idea to students. For example, in a high school class I introduce the students to one of the art movement manifestos, such as the manifesto of the surrealists. The students could use this sign, symbol image strategy to spark ideas for discussion about the purpose of a manifesto and how we can connect art movements to our own interests and viewpoints. This strategy lends itself well to English Language Learners, students with special needs and any students who feel more comfortable communicating visually.

One point of improvement I have for myself is to find another way to address the class. I was not aware I used the term “you guys” as often as I do and I have decided to address the class as “artists” or “everyone,” or in the elementary school I have been using the term “friends.” I wish to find the right balance between being informal and still being professional. I also forgot to post the learning target and success criteria at the beginning as well as my plan for the day. In my own classroom I will always post these items, so students know what to expect. If I taught this lesson again, I would also allow for more time at the end to ask how others would use this strategy in their content areas. When utilizing this strategy in my classroom I would still have the students break into small groups to share their signs, symbols, and images with each other, but I would create an exit ticket where students chose a sign, symbol or image and rated themselves on a scale of 1 to 4 as to how well they thought their image represented their big idea. They would also write a short statement on why they gave themselves that rating.

One of the strategies I enjoyed was the Circle of Viewpoints. I believe that in studying art and literature we can teach students about empathy and what better way to model empathy than by having students step into another person’s shoes? Art history can be quite dull and dry if we just present the facts to students, but if we can explore the context of why, when and where the art was made it provides a more well-rounded exploration for the students. For example, there is an artist named Goya who was famous in Spain in the 19th century who was put on trial by the Catholic Church for painting a nude woman. I could just present those facts, but a better way is to teach a short lesson on the society of Spain at this time and students could put themselves in the place of Goya, the Church at the trial and the Spanish citizens viewing the trial using the Circle of Viewpoints strategy. This is a great way to integrate history and social studies into an art lesson and get a class discussion started.