

INSTRUCTIONAL SUBUNIT ON GIFTED LANGUAGE ARTS



Prepared by Brenda Wilson
Lucas County Educational Service Center
Springfield Local Schools

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Rationale

Gifted services at Springfield Local Schools are provided based on cognitive identification rather than specific academic identification. In order to meet the needs of all of our gifted students, there is a need for a multiple subject curriculum. The Language Arts curriculum is just one of these content areas. Our program utilizes materials developed by the College of William and Mary as well as higher level vocabulary, novels recommended for gifted students, and genre studies.

The main instructional model used in this design is the Inquiry Model. Students are encouraged to analyze literature, ask questions, and draw their own conclusions based on the information provided. They are encouraged to formulate their own decisions based on the information provided. They are also given the opportunity to change their opinions as new information is presented. The model ties well with the affective and cognitive domains of Bloom's Taxonomy. At the beginning of the school year, students are explicitly taught about Blooms and are encouraged to use the questioning techniques to help drive their own instruction in and out of the gifted classroom. The purpose of utilizing the Inquiry Model as stated by Chiarelott (2006) is to provide students with an opportunity to "rediscover their natural curiosity and propensity for questioning" (p. 117).

This subunit provides contextual learning for students as they are encouraged to tie the content to background knowledge as well as real world applications. Students are evaluated through formative and summative assessments as well as mini-conferences and portfolios. The purpose of these assessments is to evaluate both the

process and product. The teacher shares data and has discussion of portfolio items so that students may have a part in their own learning.

Overall, our gifted class would be considered a constructivist classroom. We focus on the concept of change as the “big concept,” and we build on what students already know. The teacher’s role is definitely interactive with a value on process as well as product (p. 88). Contextual learning is appropriate in order to meet the unique needs of gifted students.

Resources

Charelott, Leigh (2006). Curriculum in Context. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

VanTassel-Baska, J, & Stambaugh, T (2006). *Comprehensive Curriculum for Gifted Learners*. 3rd ed. Boston: Pearson.