

Statement of Purpose

Unit 7 – ‘Car Buying’

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One of the biggest moments in any teenager’s life is getting their driver’s license. For most, this happens at some point between sophomore and senior year. The problem is so often students and young adults plan to buy a car without any real understanding of the process of doing so.

In my Personal Finance class we are learning the fundamentals of finance along with a array of real-life scenarios to help these students now and later in life. The first big purchase for almost everyone is an automobile. Self-Directed learning recognizes that students have an innate need to exercise control over their own lives (Chiarelott, p. 121) and buying a car is empowering to all learners. The life skills learned in this class are transferable to ‘real’ life and all students will see an immediate relevance to this car buying unit without any additional motivation from the teacher or even extrinsic rewards. Lifelong learning is what we are all hoping for with every student and this unit is a great guide to self-directed learning as the process of buying a car has a fundamental outline but the students will get a good flavor for their ability to self-direct and this is a great precursor to adult life. According to Patricia Cross and Malcolm Knowles, about 70 percent of adult learning is self-directed (Chiarelott, 122) and few financial decisions are made in k-12 so it is imperative that they are ready for the real thing when the time comes

Unit 7 of this Finance class is dedicated to learning how to buy a car that is appropriate and affordable for each person. Utilizing other lessons previously learned from banking to debt to career choice, we will build upon these concepts as we learn the intricacies of car buying, from finding the right car to the right insurance. It is a detailed process that is often overlooked or worse, unknown until most people are already consumed by it. When this unit is completed, our students will have a self completed car buying guide and experience in real life simulations to better prepare for their first real car purchase or their next one.

This unit will utilize the **Self-Directed Learning Model** as the basis of learning through experience. Buying a car is a very real experience that everyone feels connected to and this model supports the process of student-directed learning. From assessing one’s current

knowledge of the car buying process to the final student-created car-buying guide, this unit will capture their attention, develop their research skills, and allow them to create a useful, meaningful product. As the book states, [SDL] is based upon the belief that the learner grows in experience and he/she becomes a major resource for determining future learning (Chiarelott, 121).

The Car Buying Unit will be planned using the **5-E Method** (Chiarelott, p. 91). These plans as you will see in the lesson plan examples attached are meant to utilize student inputs and energies into a positive, but not yet defined outcome. *This constructivist approach works best when the content and outcomes allow for a range of possible acceptable responses, some of which may not be immediately discernible to the teacher when planning instruction* (Chiarelott, 111). This model will prove worthy for this unit as [SDL] says that subject matter orientation stifles learner initiative and that the natural way of learning immerses students in problem-centered experiences, personal projects, and current needs (Chiarelott, p. 122). The connection that our students have with the prospect of buying a car will allow for successful adaptation of student-driven learning.

Chiarelott, Leigh. (2006). *Curriculum in Context*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning.