Social Studies Teacher Best Practices

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| **Elements of Best Practice With Definition** | **What the teacher is doing?** | **What the students are doing?** | **Comments** |
| Engagement*When presenting information in a creative way, students will want to learn more and be active participants in the learning process.* | - Grabbing the students attention and creating moments of excitement and willingness to learn- Using a variety of teaching strategies and resources to appeal to student learning | - Engaged in the learning process- Active participant and taking ownership in their learning-Enjoying and able to relate to the learning process they are experiencing |  |
| Prior Knowledge*Knowledge that stems from previous experiences.* | - Determines what students already know and able to see what the base line is for student learning - Make learning relevant to student lives- Determines what misconceptions students may have | - Students come up with questions in which they may have and want to investigate - Students make connections to content and understands application to lesson- Students extend thinking of how does it apply to me? What will I get out of this lesson? What can I learn from this lesson? |  |
| Collaborative Learning*Students will learn more if they have the opportunity to work with their classmates.* | - Giving less individual seatwork and more group work- Directions and objectives are clear to students- Assigning more group projects, discussions, and activities- Teacher models roles and provides an open learning environment/ workshop environment for student participation- Teacher organizes diverse learning communities for rich learning experiences (teacher can control student groupings)- Teacher encourages all student thinking is important and respecting all learners in the learning community- Teachers are also a learner in the classroom | - Willing to work with others- Bring new ideas to group discussions- Students understand and can determine the objective of the lesson-Take on various roles in the collaborative working groups- Respecting all peers thoughts and ideas- Students actively participating in lesson- Students will ask questions for clarification |  |
| Authentic Resources*Students should have the opportunity to use resources other than their textbook. Especially those that are more relatable to them.* | - Providing resources for the students other than their textbook- Provide the students with resources that are relatable to them- Models and teaches about text features for each resource- Compare and Contrast different text features/purposes for each resource- Includes examples of various resources including primary, secondary, newspapers, encyclopedia, etc. and including technology integration from different medias- Talks about reliable resources and where resources are located | - Bring in resources that are relevant and relate to what is being talked about in the classroom- Students can use and understand text features to assist with learning- Students can determine the validity and reliability of resources- Students can determine the advantages and disadvantages of different resources and media- Students can locate and use resources appropriate for investigation, support, and research - Students can use technology to assist with presentation and research to support thinking |  |
| Inquiry*Provides students the opportunity to learn by doing.* | - Aligning students discovery with appropriate content statements- Using open ended questions to encourage critical thinking skills- Use Bloom’s Taxonomy to encourage higher order thinking from students- Setting the groundwork for the inquiry based lessons- Providing students with self assessment and reflection on their findings | - Students discover their own conclusions to their questions- Builds student curiosity and encourages students to be an active participant in their learning- Encourage other students to think deeper using higher order thinking skills - Students are able to express themselves in various forms; writing, reading, speaking, discussion, debating to share thought process effectively |  |
| Experimental/ Active Learning*Experiential learning offers a hands on learning approach in which students are actively involved in the learning process.*  | - Monitoring student work and providing an outline for their learning- Asking investigative questions to find out student thinking- Facilitate student learning and conclusions- Assist students who are having difficulty- Extend student thinking by offering enrichment activities for those who need to be challenged | - Students work toward finding their own answers to their own questions- Students should be moving around the classroom- In social studies the students can conduct surveys, report data, prepare group reports, have debates, and role play famous events- Students have choice to include mode of presentation |  |
| Differentiation/Scaffolding*Differentiation provides students with a variety of strategies for learning content, processes, development, and assessment. Scaffolding allows teachers the opportunity to provide structure for a student with the resources they need to succeed, lessening the support as they develop and grow.* | - Working to meet the needs of each individual student - Altering activities and assessments to meet individual students’ needs- Making learning accessible for struggling students- Challenging advanced students with meaningful activities, not busy work, increase rigor- Chunk content so that it is introduced in small doses, then bring it all together- Using a large variety of strategies to meet every students’ needs- Providing enough time for students to learn and comprehend dates and concepts in Social Studies- Using graphic organizers to assist students who are visual learners | - Students are working individually at their own pace- Students are making the most of their experiences- Students are developing and becoming more independent as they grow-Students asking for clarification  |  |
| Assessment*It is the process of documenting in measurable terms of the students knowledge, attitudes, skills, and beliefs.  Assessment should be used throughout units and not just at the very end. It should focus on all students strengths, and should therefore vary.* *Assessment is a way for teachers to view whether or not their lessons are effective for student comprehension.* | - Teacher is doing formal and informal observations before, during, and after the lesson- Teachers assesses student progress by giving formative and summative assessments- Assessments and Observations are ongoing and can be informal and formal - Students should be assessed to determine and clear up any of the students’ misconceptions by giving formative and summative assessments - Also in social studies content assessment of student knowledge can also be valued in authentic activities/assessments in which students must demonstrate content knowledge in a variety of ways including projects, speeches, debates, and any other form of application of class content that is developmentally appropriate with the lesson -Assessment is created based on the activity/assignment given to students -Authentic assessments are given to demonstrate students application of class content- Teacher evaluates data and determines plan of action for extension or reteaching of content | - Students are monitoring their own learning before, during, and after the lesson by their performance in collaboration activities, homework formatives, and assessments- Students asking questions and receiving clarification on areas in which they had misconceptions- Students do own self reflection on performance and monitor own learning-Students can use their creativity to apply what they have learned using authentic assessments-Students can have choice of how they want to apply class content and be delivered in a variety of fashions including individually and/or collaboratively using projects, speeches, debates etc.  |  |