**Tim Manz**

**Instructional Design**

**EDTL 7100**

**Statement of Purpose**

Middle school students of today have been taught to question things that they see happen around them, and question why things are the way they are. They have been taught at a young age to not accept things at face value, but to dig deeper and find out the reason why. This is a change from the past, where students just went to class, were given facts, and then recited them on tests and quizzes. Today’s students attend school where the most common teaching methods developed prior to the electronic age and have changed little since the Industrial Revolution (Cookson, 2009). Therefore, the type of lessons and techniques, that are used by teachers of middle school science, need to adapt to this change in thought process. One area of concern is the lack of knowledge that students have in regards to weather patterns around them and what causes these types of weather phenomena. This is concerning because weather is something that is happening all around the students every single day of their lives. Therefore, it is up to teachers to set forth a weather curriculum that the students can grasp and apply to their day to day lives.

One of the most effective types of curriculum to achieve this goal is the 5-E Learning cycle Model. According to Chiarelott, the five E’s are: engagement, exploration, explanation, extension, and evaluation (2006). This model “has been used successfully in science, mathematics, and social studies classrooms from kindergarten through college (Chiarelott, 2006).” It is a successful model for several reasons.

The first reason is that this model is set up to encompass a lesson plan that covers several days. This fits well into my teaching style, because most of my lessons cover a several day period of time, and are not one-shot lessons. These types of lesson are more meaningful to the students because they are given the time to think about and evaluate what they are learning. They are also given the opportunity to see how each lesson fits together and how it can be applied to the real world. One shot lessons give the students a staggered view of their learning and consequently they sometimes have a hard time fitting their learning together into the bigger context. I also set my lessons up in a similar fashion to this model in that I have an activity that engages the interest of the learner, has hands-on exploratory activities, and then has an evaluation aspect. Part of a contextualize curriculum is making the learning meaningful to the students. According to Ornstein, students must be active in their learning environments and that learning should not be separated from students’ lives (2009).This model will help me accomplish this. This model will also help me to relate the learning to the students’ real world lives and situations. According to Ornstein, Dewey believed that problem-solving skills learned in school will also transfer to skills that can be used to solve society’s everyday problems (2009).This will give the students a real-world context which is part of any successful curriculum.

Another part of this model that appeals to me is that it can be set up for, and is encouraged to be set up for, group learning. This type of cooperative learning gives the students a real-world type of learning, in which they will be working with other people in their future jobs. Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy in which small teams of students with varying ability levels, use a variety of learning activities to improve their learning in a subject area (Johnson 2001). In this manner, students actively participate and assist each other in their learning. Group work helps to build social, time management, and collaboration skills that will be needed for the students’ future lives. Many of my current lessons incorporate this learning style so my lessons will not need to be changed very much. I have seen that group work is the most effective at this level, so this model will facilitate this.

**Works Cited**

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