



Standard 3 : Educators understand and apply knowledge of student growth and development

1. The chosen evidence is my first lesson plan for a differentiated math unit that I carried out during my first practicum in grade 4-5. It shows that I conducted a pre-assessment of the students and carefully evaluated the level of understanding of all students as well as the strategies that they knew. I could tell that a group of grade 4 students needed to use manipulatives in order to understand multiplications and divisions. They were at the concrete operational stage of development (Piaget) and they were also kinesthetic learners. Other grade 4 students seemed to be entering the formal operation stage and they understood how to use repeated addition to solve simple multiplications but did not know how make use of place-value and multiplication tables to solve more complicated ones. A group of grade 4 and all the grade 5 students were clearly in the concrete operational stage. They used many strategies, including the multiplication standard algorithm, to solve multiplication questions, but they did not know how to multiply by 2 digits numbers. The lesson plan shows that I used a rotation between 3 activities: direct instruction and group practice, independent practice, and multiplication games. The students worked with peers who were at similar developmental stages with activities that were within their own zone of proximal development.

2. I chose this evidence in relation to Standard 3 because this differentiated unit demonstrates how I use my understanding of my students' various levels of development to carefully plan differentiated instruction that meets the needs of all learners in the class. In this project, I used both direct instruction, independent practice and fun math games. Students worked with peers who were at a similar developmental stage and level of ability. Therefore, during math games, students challenged each other at an appropriate level and there wasn't an obvious winner or loser. During group practice, students who were usually disengaged in math came proudly to the board to share their answers with their peers of similar level. They were experiencing success in math and were able to work independently on their worksheet the next day. I loved to have some students exclaim with surprise: "I can do this!", because it was at their level. I also loved the look of satisfaction of some grade 4 students who were working on the grade 5 curriculum and being challenged at their level. When one of them finished his worksheet early, he was happy to see that I had prepared "extra-work" for him.

3. This learning standard is important to me as a new teacher because I care about making sure that my teaching responds to the needs of all my students. Teaching math in this way was rewarding, but it was also a challenge in planning and organization, as well as classroom management. I couldn't have done it without my sponsor teacher supervising the groups who were playing math games in the pod while the

other groups were working in the classroom. Moving forward, I ask myself how I can collaborate with other teachers to create math groups that blend various classrooms according to the stages of development and learning styles of students. Each teacher could focus on instructing one group that is a similar level, allowing all students to work with peers of a similar stage without the teacher having to prepare 3 lessons each day! I also ask myself how I can include more self-directed learning and inquiry in my classroom to increase engagement and to allow for even more success in meeting the needs of individual students.