

LEVEL 6 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

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Lecturer:	Alison S Evans	Internal Verifier:		
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Submission deadline:	26 November 2018	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	17 December 2018	
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark. Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 40%. Over one week late, 0%. Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may approve a change to submission dates.			
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.			

Part B(i)

When approaching and planning my microteach session I considered both a behaviourist and a constructivist approach, focusing on the works of: Skinner (1953), Bruner (1976) and Piaget (1976) respectively. However, when considering current legislation and documentation, notably Successful Futures (Donaldson 2015) and the National Curriculum for Geography (Welsh Assembly Government 2008), Vygotsky's (1978) approach of social constructivism seemed the best suited to what I wanted my learners to achieve.

The constructivist theory that *"learning takes place when new information is built into and added onto an individual's current structure of knowledge, understanding and skills"* (Pritchard 2009) is similar to Vygotsky but there is a key difference. With a social constructivist approach the onus for learning is on the interaction of individuals with those around them making communication in learning essential, constructivists simply view the learner as a single entity passing through stages of development, acquiring and developing knowledge as they grow.

When considering the direction education in Wales is taking in light of Donaldson (2015), my scheme of work was very much designed for pupil led learning. Many of the tasks have been developed to incorporate pupil interaction through pair and group work, often open ended in nature giving them the opportunity to question and think laterally.

Pedagogy itself is incredibly important when approaching what and the way in which you wish to teach, however the key relationship is how you apply pedagogical approaches to the national curriculum to ensure pupils achieve their educational goals. My session was aimed at key stage 3 with my scheme of work building on prior knowledge from key stage 2 and shared cross-curriculum knowledge from science.

Although not covered directly in my teaching session, I believe it is important during this exercise to mention Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC). Geography as a subject is uniquely suited to this framework as it is all about people, the world and their place in it. Development of one's own learning through investigation and assessment about the world around them is vital, and case studies should be relevant and where possible topical (Welsh Assembly Government 2008). As mentioned geography is unique in its ability to meet this framework and the QTS standards involved. Through my scheme of work, I have included examples at both local and global levels, as well as referenced the topics of climate change in order to engage pupils with the impact's humans have on the environment (specifically biomes in this instance).

Throughout all stages of planning reference must be made to the Literacy and Numeracy framework (LNF). *"The LNF is first and foremost a curriculum planning tool that supports all teachers to embed literacy and numeracy in their teaching of the curriculum"* (Welsh Assembly Government 2013; pg4). For all subjects it is key that the LNF is addressed and included, subtly or directly. When planning my scheme of work a key element for me was to make every starter activity was literacy

or numeracy based, as well as incorporating it throughout the lessons. As with ESDGC geography is capable of encompassing both literacy and numeracy into the schemes of work. When used as starter activities it was vital that I made the tasks engaging and fun, with the hope of encouraging those learners who may have a predisposition to dislike literacy and particularly numeracy to fully engage. One tactic I wish to implement is the creation of a class league table. Each starter will be treated as a game, and as pupils will be seated in groups, each group will get points based on their answers, attitude to learning and behaviour. At the end of the scheme of work pupils will be rewarded. My intention is that this could be used as a behaviour management tool also, taking away points from individuals for failing to complete homework and negative behaviour.

The main aim of my microteach session and scheme of work was to act as a facilitator for learning, giving minimal teaching input to pupils (Griffith and Burns, 2013). By setting open ended tasks to be completed in pairs/small groups the onus was on the pupil to learn, myself providing the scaffolding for pupils to help them take the next step in their zone of proximal development (ZPD), incorporating Bruner's (1966) approach. My approach was influenced by the ideas put forward by social constructivists like Vygotsky (1978) and current documents, predominantly Successful Futures (Donaldson, 2015), who believe that collaborative learning is key to pupil learning.

Part Bii

After evaluating the literature and theories that have influenced my micro-teaching session, a period of reflection is required. My reflection will encompass feedback I have received from my university tutor and peers (who are first hand witnesses to the session), observations I have made myself through re-watching the session and observations I have made during my first placement. Many of the personal reflections expressed are influenced by the feedback I have received from my placement mentors. For the purpose of this assignment I will focus on a few specific targets in order to provide a more in-depth evaluation which I believe will be more beneficial to my overall teaching practice.

One of the main focuses of reflection I have of my microteach is the level of differentiation, which Griffith and Burn (2013) see as essential to successful learning. One of the main criticisms was the lack of challenge in the work set. Although consideration had been given to QTS Standard 1.1:

"S1.1 They understand the diverse learning needs of learners and endeavour to provide the best possible education for them to maximise their potential, whatever their individual aspirations, personal circumstances or cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds." (Welsh Assembly Government 2009)

And work had been differentiated by resource, on reflection I only gave a real focus to one particular set of individuals, those who may struggle to access work. The failure to consider challenge for more able and talented (MAT) learners is also highlighted by QTS standard 2.2(i) which references the "including all learners"

(Welsh Assembly Government 2009) section set out at the beginning of all national curriculums. The national curriculum for geography states that MAT learners should be catered for by *“using material in ways that extend breadth and depth of study and opportunities for independent learning”* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008; pg.5). Although a worksheet was provided with minimal to no support for MAT learners, it did not stretch them into their ‘struggle zone’ or ZPD. Classroom observations and mentor feedback have made me more aware of the importance of these individuals. I have observed that often when challenging work is not available students become frustrated and deviate from the lesson, either by becoming disruptive through boredom or they become disinterested. This effect on classroom and behaviour management has shown me just how important it is to challenge the thinking and knowledge of individuals, rather than just giving them an extra task to keep focus while they wait. Capel et al. (2013) raise the point that differentiation cannot be provided for every individual for every task but should be built into every task to challenge individuals. Only one task during my session was specifically differentiated. On reflection, I recognise the need for appropriate differentiation for all pupils throughout the lesson to help ensure the development of knowledge and engagement with topics. Every task needs to be challenging, not just challenging for certain learners.

As mentioned above I differentiated based on resource. Although in practice this worked to some extent and I was praised for the resources and scaffolding used, the quality of my resources needs improvement. There were issues with colour and some resources, specifically a map, once printed were difficult to interpret. In future greater consideration must be given to resources, as digitally they may appear suitable but in reality, cause more confusion than good. More consideration must also be given to resources for those with specified learning disorders e.g. Dyslexia. I also believe that the differentiation I employed was too obvious and could potentially be a source of questioning from pupils, potentially making them feel isolated and different to the rest of the class.

Another focus for improvement is the questioning involved with regard to the objectives of the lesson. Although a structure was followed, and tasks built upon each other, the quality of questioning I employed was too simple. Rather than trying to engage pupils and get them to think more about what was required of them, I used basic questions of ‘what? Why? How?’ Although attempts were made to follow the principles put forward in Bloom’s taxonomy (1956), on reflection I have misunderstood it and not used it to its full potential. In light of my first teaching experiences and observation, I simply ignored some elements/phrases of questions limiting the progress of learning. Also relating to the issues surrounding my questioning, I failed to readdress my initial learning objectives. By failing to do this, learners were not aware of whether they had met them and, in some sense, could not reflect and be praised for what they had achieved.

Although my instructions were clear, and pupils knew what they had to do, no success criteria were supplied in order for them to know if they were completing the task to the required level. Donaldson (2015) stresses the need for pupils to have structure to achieve a goal, using the idea that pupils become involved in their own

learning process and developing their own success criteria (Welsh Assembly Government, 2013). This can also be linked to the questioning employed by Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom 1956). The objectives set forth for this lesson were vague and therefore would affect the quality of questioning and success criteria. Donaldson's (2015) approach and Blooms Taxonomy (1956) work hand in hand, focusing pupil learning whilst letting them take charge of their knowledge. Following Bloom and focusing questioning and developing learning step by step pupils can see how to achieve their aim. Questioning can be seen as a "*driving force of developing thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom*" (Welsh Assembly Government 2010; pg. 16).

Although areas of improvement have been recognised and targets set, I would like to consider the elements of my teaching session that went well. Throughout I used incidental Welsh when appropriate. The date was presented in Welsh and I strived to give my pupil praise in Welsh also. As put forward by Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) (2003) Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig helps to give pupils an identity and the Welsh language is something that should be engaged with at all times. I also believe that Geography with regard to y cwricwlwm cymreig is uniquely positioned as it can showcase Wales, its landscape and its people. Although not appropriate for the teaching session carried out, Welsh examples can be used to demonstrate key geographical knowledge, even at a local level.

While pupils presented to the class, I made the decisions for those not participating to fill in a table. By setting a task for pupils who would otherwise be idle, they remained focused and engaged with what was being said. This approach may not always be appropriate depending on the task in hand and group sizes involved. However, for this particular session where pupils worked in pairs/threes it worked. All pupils completed the task with minimal fuss and disruption.

Although my starter was not sufficient in making learners think, it did quickly engage learners. Room for development is clearly needed. However, my plenary of "around the world" kept pupils engaged, it encouraged communication between learners with knowledge and those without. The fun and interactive activity may also help with knowledge recall. Adaptions may need to be made as the way I conducted the plenary (getting pupils to throw a beachball around the classroom) could be a behaviour management problem and only work for certain classes.

Another element some of my peers commended me on was my movement around the classroom and constant praise. I believe this to be key as it not only encourages pupils to engage with the teacher, it also gives them the confidence to ask for help and answer questions. It also provides an opportunity for assessment for learning and the setting of extension tasks if required for 'early finishers'.

Carrying forward from the praise of clear instruction, my general demeanour was also praised. It was noted that my lesson delivery was calm and confident. I believe that this would impact my learners because it is my personal belief that a teacher sets the classroom environment. Classroom based observations have shown me that if a teacher is stressed/not prepared, then more often than not the learners can

sense this and become disruptive. By remaining calm and being clear in what is expected, pupils respond and engage quickly.

During the microteach session there were no concerns with regard to behaviour management as the learners in front of me were adults and knew the expected level of behaviour. I have observed that behaviour management need not be obvious, but subtle elements that help orchestrate a lesson. There are times when authoritative tone and instruction are required, but more often than not I have observed that it is the simple reminders of behaviour and what is expected that seems to work best. From what I have seen, behaviour of the class is highly dependant on the relationship with and teaching style of the teacher.

The micro-teach session was my first ever experience acting as a teacher/facilitator in a classroom scenario. On reflection it has proven an incredibly useful base from which to assess my progress. Some problems identified during this session are acting as current targets for my teaching, and I believe that constant reflection and improvement is important as I move forward in my journey to become a teacher.

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Appendix

Appendix A – Action Plan

ACTION PLAN 1:
Objectives for Term 2

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	SUCCESS CRITERIA	TARGET DATE
To improve use of questioning and lesson aims QTS 3.1	(i) Develop good understanding of Blooms Taxonomy (1956) and other literature on questioning types and formulating questions use in planning. (ii) Observe teachers with effective questioning practice. (iii) Develop purposeful questions that challenge individuals and help further their knowledge and thinking (iv) improve use of lesson objectives and refer back to during lesson	- Improved knowledge of Bloom and other pedagogies - Implemented successful questioning techniques based on teacher observation. - Improved questioning and structure of lesson plans, discussions with mentor to ensure this is met and continued - Pupils responses improve with use of better questioning	Jan 2019
To improve own assessment for learning QTS 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3	(i) Read assessment for learning frameworks (ii) Observe good practice using structured observation schedule to record and note successful techniques (iii) develop strategies for in class monitoring and assessment beyond basic recall and "hands up"	- Implement new AFL strategies - answer questions and development of fuller responses - Evidence of new/improved techniques observed by Mentor and then success discussed	Jan 2019
To improve use of differentiation for all abilities QTS 1.1, 2.2	(i) Ensure awareness for all pupils and learning needs of class, (plan as appropriate) (ii) Differentiate beyond resource e.g. through questioning (iii) Relating to target 1 of action plan, challenge learners to expand their knowledge into their zone of proximal development	- Consultation with ALN register and mentor to ensure work is appropriate for learners - Tasks move beyond something to fill time and maintain focus, they add to pupils learning and understanding - Pupils demonstrate engagement in range of questioning	Jan 2019