**Key Assignment 1: EC-6 Candidate Work Sample (ECH 350)**

Creative Title for Literacy Project

At the beginning of the spring semester in 2015, the teacher candidate assessed a select

number of children in a first grade classroom at Raguet Elementary School. After assessing the

children, she worked with them three times per week on building reading skills such as fluency,

decoding words, and comprehension. Throughout the semester the children have shown

improvement with their ability to read efficiently. There is, however, some areas the students

were stronger in than others and also progressed at different rates.

Culture/Climate

There are twenty two students total in the classroom. Making up this sum, are ten girls

and twelve boys. The most prominently found ethnicity is African-American having a total of

nine students. There is one male student who is Burmese. The remaining students are

Caucasian, having a total of seven, and Hispanic, with a total of five. In the small group that

the teacher candidate worked with included two Caucasian boys and an African-American

	Caucasion	African-Americ	Hispanic	Other
Boys	4	5	2	1
Girls	3	4	3	0
Total	7	9	5	1
Column 4				
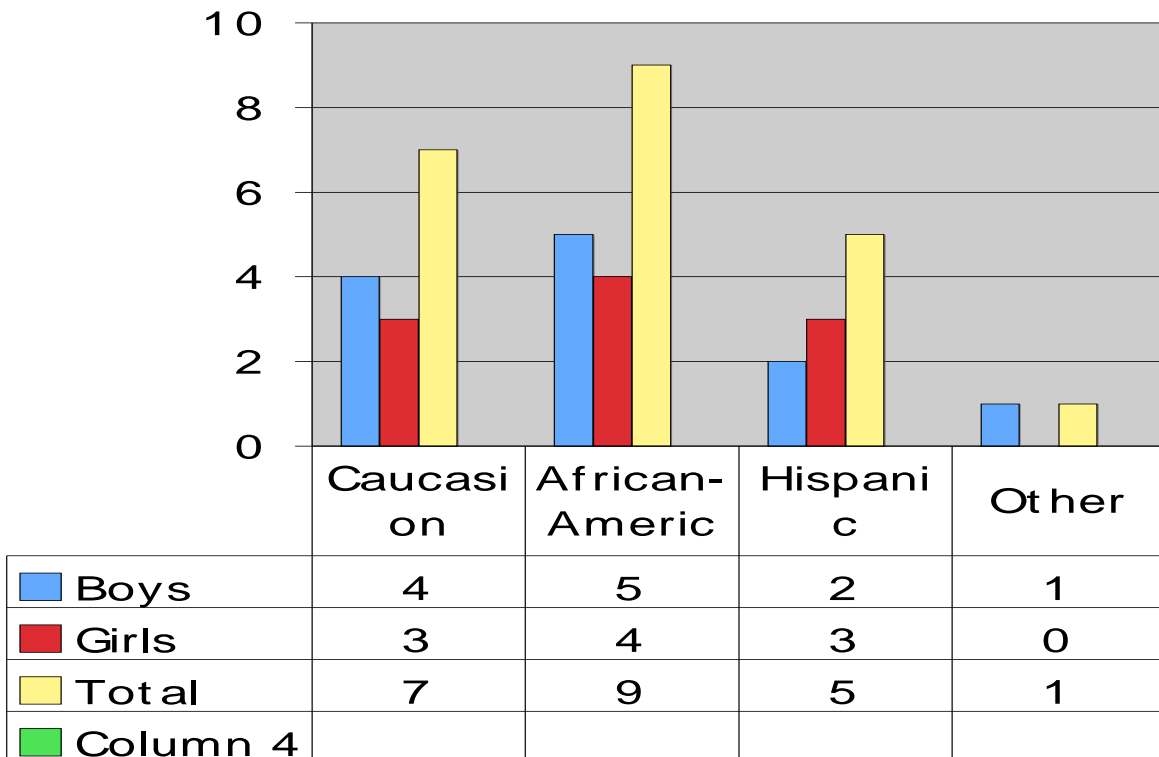
girl. The group worked best in a quiet environment. The students were distracted when in a setting that was loud or with other students moving around. "Teachers can establish clear expectations for behavior in two ways: by establishing clear rules and procedures, and by providing consequences for student behavior (Marzano, 2003)." The teacher candidate made sure to explain to students the purpose of reading practice and the expectations of her group. To prevent distractions from occurring, the teacher candidate would present her lessons in the cafeteria of the elementary school where there were tables the children could sit at isolating themselves from any disturbance in their focus. The teacher candidate realized this when the students would stand up to see what else was going on in room. This forced the teacher candidate to resolve the issue by relocating her small group to a place where the students could better focus.

The schedule for the class is very busy. There is not a moment where the kids have much down time. On specific days, the mentor teacher expected the interns to work with the lower level students to build fluency and comprehension. A chart is shown that describes the schedule of the mentor teacher's classroom. On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, the students are in the computer lab. This is where they work with technology to build reading fluency and comprehension using a software known as I-Station. The mentor teacher would have the teacher candidates pull certain students who need more reading practice during this time. The teacher candidate would select a story for them to read and the students will take turns reading out loud. On Thursdays, the class will visit the library and students take Accelerated Reader tests over the books they have been reading individually.

8:10-8:30	Read Aloud
8:30-9:00	Word Study

9:00-9:20	Mini Lesson
9:20- 10:45	Reading/Conferring
10:50-11:40	Electives
11:50-12:20	Lunch
12:20-12:40	Recess
12:45-1:15	Reading/Writing Connection
1:15-1:45	Science/Social Studies/Interventions
1:45-3:00	Math

The figure below shows the layout of the classroom. There are six tables where the students sit. They have assigned seating based on how well those students work with each other at that table. The teacher of this particular class made sure to allow space for children to read around the room and not have to be at their table the whole day. The rectangular rug is also used often for shared reading and discussion time. Each child has a specific spot on the rug where he or she sits. The teacher candidate noticed how welcoming the classroom seemed. The walls displayed many sight words and literacy concepts. The mentor teacher made a point to incorporate learning throughout every aspect of the class. Authors of *Inviting Positive Classroom Discipline*, William Purkey and David Strahan, say that "successful teachers 'invite' positive discipline based on their understanding of themselves and their students as well as on practical, concrete, and specific strategies for accomplishing this goal." The mentor teacher of this class had a system of disciplining her students. There was a chart that had four colors: purple, green, yellow, and red. Each student had a magnetic dot with a number that corresponded to their name. The entire class began the day with their dot on

green. If a child had exceptional behavior that day, then they would move their dot to purple. Those on purple would get a small prize. For those who acted out, would move their dot to yellow and continual misbehaviors resulted in moving all the way to red. The mentor teacher allowed students to make up for poor behavior. The children were able to redeem themselves and go back to green by making positive choices the rest of the day. The classroom environment was very well structured for the age of the students along with the discipline strategy.
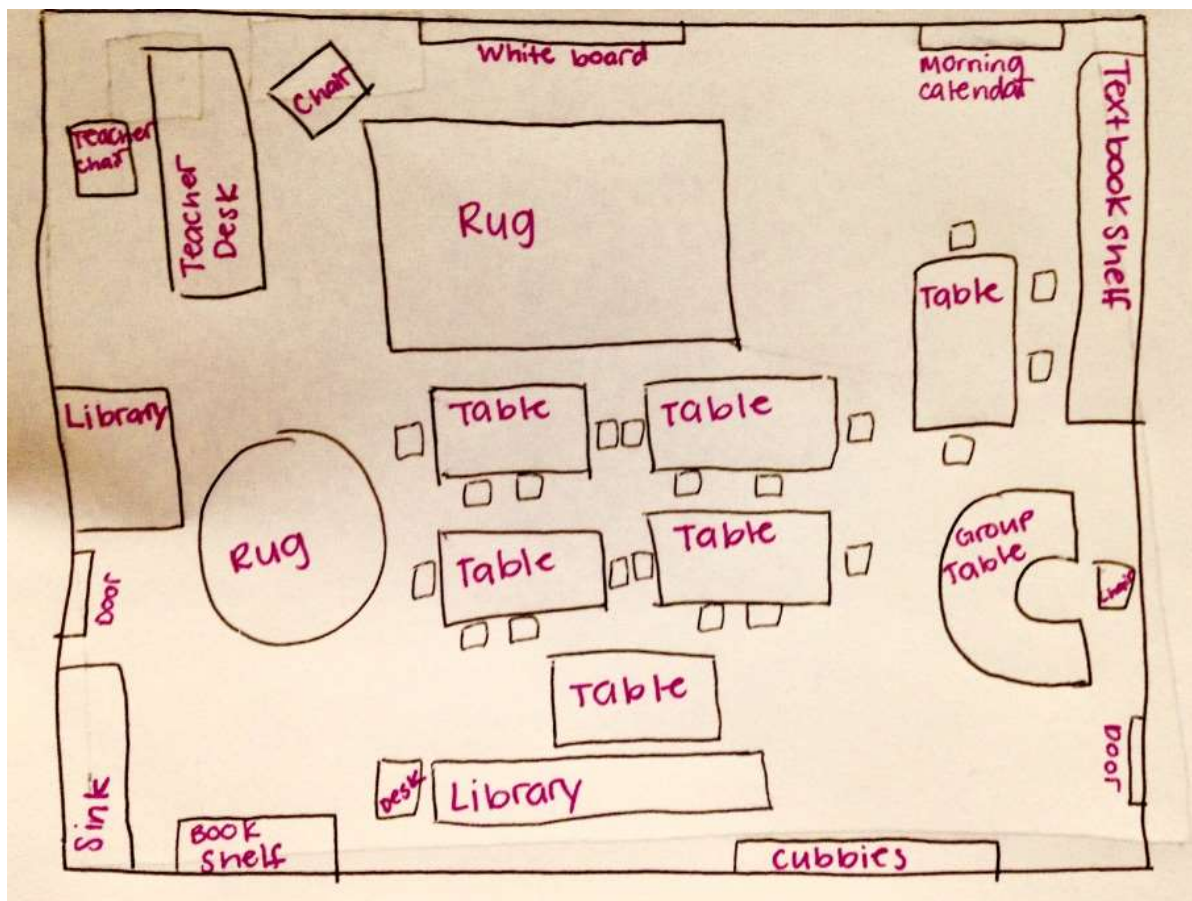
The teacher candidate worked directly with three children in the class. There were two boys and one girl. Both boys were seven years of age and the girl was six. The boys were also both Caucasian and the girl was African-American. All three students were on similar reading levels. They all had trouble sounding out and decoding certain words in text. None of the

students had much motivation to read. Each student was very social and always wanted to share his and her ideas. They did not all get along well, however. Tattle tailing, whining, and interrupting were common when having a conversation within the group.

Family/School

For the sake of confidentiality, the two boys will be Student B, Student E, and the girl will be Student A. Student B did not have much support at home. His mother passed away when he was four and his father is busy with work and cannot always make time for Student B to have extra practice. Student A and E, however, had both parents involved and also had strong family involvement when it came to learning, but no student had much motivation.

Parental involvement within the class is extremely important in the development of adolescence. Family involvement is a two-way street. Journal author, Joyce Epstien says, "If educators view children simply as students, they are likely to see the family as separate from the school." There are many ways teachers can bridge the gap from school to home. For example, teachers can send home letters and assignments that allow parents to have a better perspective of what is going on in the classroom. For the spring 2015 semester, teacher candidates were required to write letters to the parents of the students in their small groups. These letters allowed parents to know that the teacher candidate was willing to work with their child and wanted to be a resource of learning. This strategy should be used for full time teachers as well. Communicating to parents creates an open and trusting relationship where both parties are actively engaged in the child's life.

Sending home activities for students to complete with parents or guardians gives a first hand look at what is being taught in the classroom. The teacher candidate created a lesson that was able to be completed at home. It involved an activity for children to do with their parents,

but also able of being completed individually. The point of the activity was to build reading comprehension and allow for parents to see progress their child has made in the class. Take home assignments do not have to be taken up for a grade, but simply serve as a manipulative to use for parents and children.

Data Collection/Analyses

Instruction in the classroom is very important because it gives structure and expectations to the students. The following topics being discussed refer to instruction and knowing how to apply data to help students learn in a way that is developmentally appropriate.

Individual Student Data Analysis

The children have progressed with their reading skills. At the beginning of the year, the teacher candidate provided three distinct assessments to measure their reading fluency and knowledge. The three informal assessments were the Running Record, Instant Fry's Words, and the Quick Phonics Screener. The bar graph below shows the average student score on each assessment from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester. The students were very similar in the areas they struggled in and even scored closely on each assessment. The Running Record data shows the average score of DRA, or Developmental Reading Assessment, levels. At the beginning of the semester, each student scored a six. By the end of the year, the average went up to an eight. Each group of the instant Fry words were tested and out of all, the average score at the beginning of the semester was a 23 out of 25 words. By the end of the semestser, the students knew almost all of the words in every group. The Quick Phonics Screener was the third to be tested. At the beginning of the semester, the students scored an average of six out of ten words in each section. One common error was found in vowel patterns such as diagraphs and vowel paired syllables. By the end of the year, the students knew an

average of eight out of ten words in each section.

Assessment Results
Average Score of Students
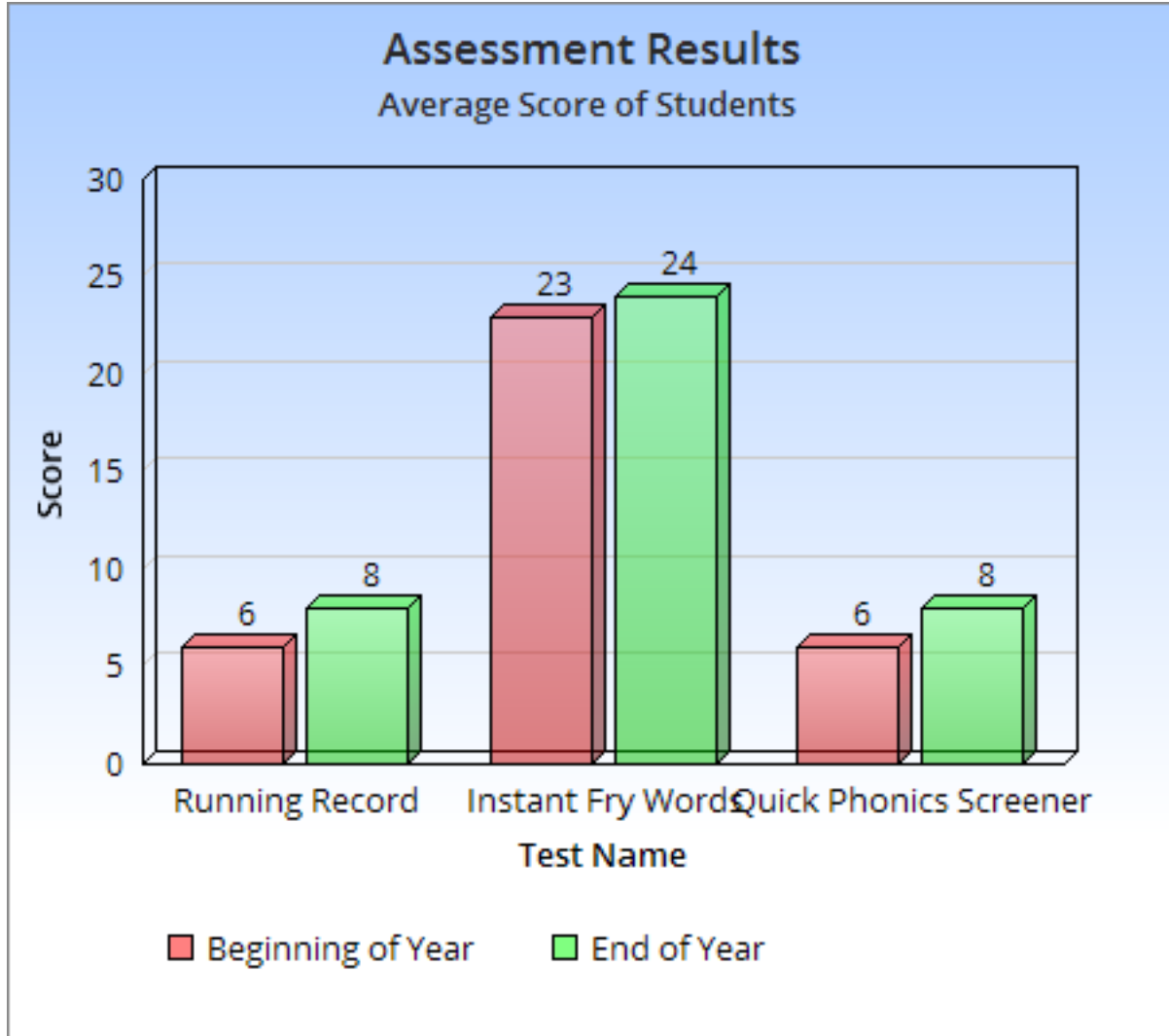
Individual Student Needs

      Being able to adapt as a teacher is a valuable skill to have. Not every student learns the same and need to be taught in different ways. For the small group, Student B had trouble with common spelling patterns such as CVVC, CVC and vowel diagraphs. Student E did not know how to read words that ended with a silent /e/ and also did not know consonant diagraphs. Student A had low fluency and trouble with reading words that made sense in the sentence.

Since each student had trouble in different areas, the teacher candidate was required to adapt to the needs of each student. For this to be done, the teacher candidate tried to include multiple content areas in each lesson. Therefore, the needs of each student would be incorporated.

Group Analysis Data

In the small group, the teacher candidate had recorded all of the test scores from the assessments given. The students in the group all struggled in common areas and also scored in similar ranges. They had trouble relying on guessing words rather than actually sounding them out. The bar graph below is a representation of the beginning of the assessment scores of the Running Record, Fry's Sight Word List, and the Quick Phonics Screener. The students could show improvement in every area. Student A had the highest score in almost every

area. The other two students scored about the same.

Assessment Results
Average Score of Students
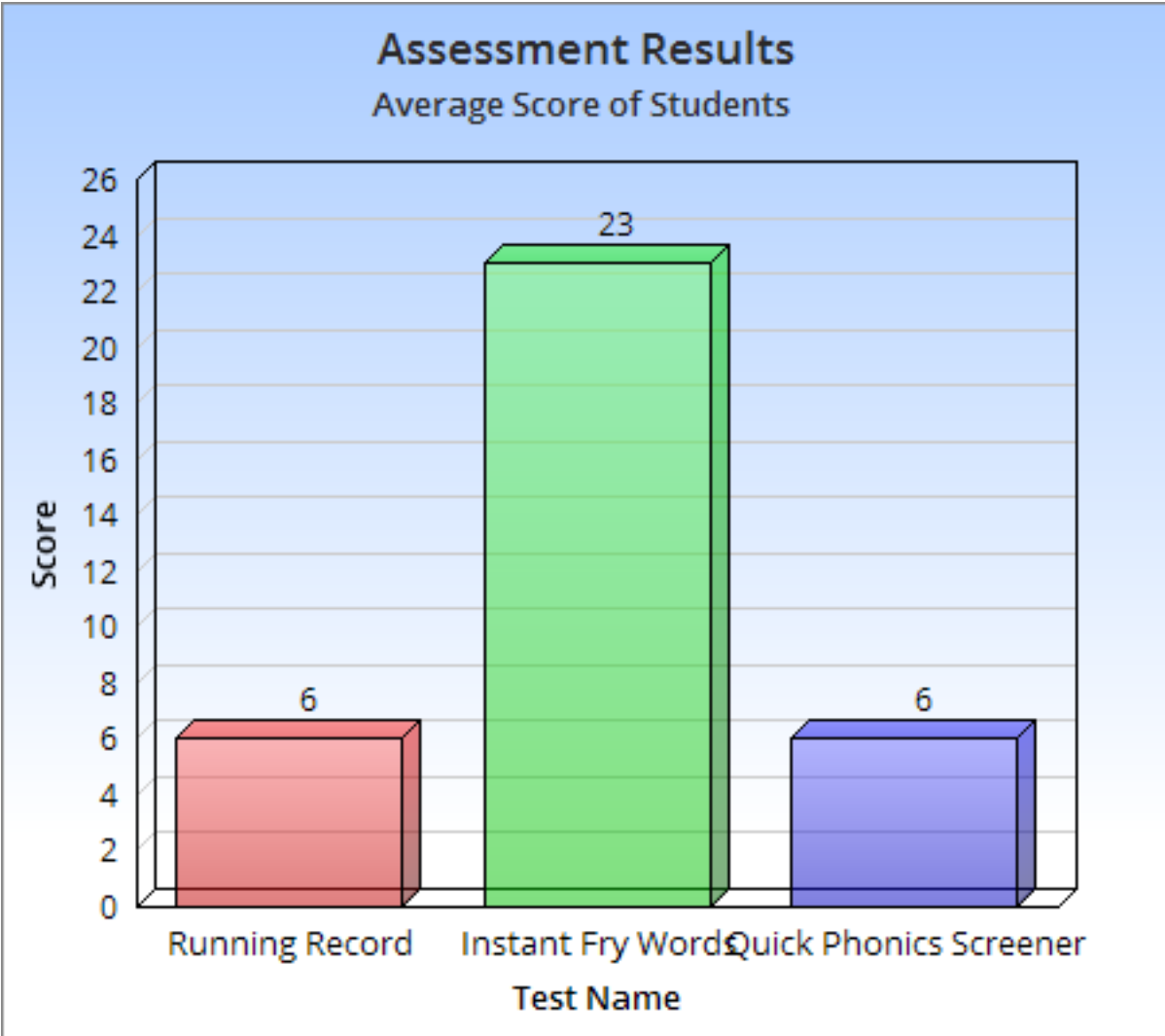
Group Needs

The students in the group all wanted attention. They all wanted to answer every question and did not want anyone else to have a turn. This made the dynamic of the group difficult for the teacher candidate to teach. Each child needed as much extra practice reading as possible. Help in fluency and decoding words was also a common area of need. They were, however, strong in retell and comprehension. Based on assessment results, overlooking letters in words or guessing certain words was common, especially on words with CVVC patterns and diagraphs.

Initial Plan of Action

At the beginning of the semester, the teacher candidate assessed each child in the small group in three distinct ways: Running Record, Quick Phonics Screener and Instant Fry Words. Student B seemed to be a struggling reader. He did not take the time to look at all the letters in the word. He made up or skipped many words in the text because he was not able to decode them. By the end of the year, the goal of the teacher candidate was to be able to decode the sounds in the words. The teacher candidate also expected him to know and understand the rules to different word patterns and thus increasing one DRA level and be able to read 100 percent of the 1(c) Fry Words. Student A scored higher than what the mentor teacher had her as on a DRA level. Her fluency was low and she relied on visual cues to read unknown words. The teacher candidate set a goal to increase her DRA level to a ten by the end of twelve weeks. And finally, Student E had a difficult time coding consonant diagraphs and seemed a bit distracted when given the assessments. He could not properly read simple words such as "any" and did not follow the rule to reading r-controlled vowel sounds. The goals for this student was to finish the semester on a DRA level eight. Practicing the weak areas the students struggled in was the main focus for the teacher candidate in the twelve week period. The teacher candidate wanted to give the students ample amount of reading practice in order to become more familiar with common word patterns and sounds.

Instructional Strategies

There were a few instructional strategies the teacher candidate used to help guide the lesson. First, the teacher candidate would model what the expectations of each lesson. This

allowed students to have an idea of how to go about an assessment or how to tackle difficult vocabulary words. Secondly, the teacher candidate gave time to let the students share their ideas about the lesson. If there were any thoughts or predictions made, the teacher candidate would call on each student to share. This not only helped the teacher candidate have a better understanding of whether or not the students understood the topic, but also gave students the opportunity to express ideas and conference on those thoughts. Finally, the teacher candidate would help the students reflect on their own thinking by instructing them to find and write examples of certain topics. For example, if the lesson discussed R-controlled vowels then the students were able to go back in the text and write down examples they find. All of these strategies were used to help further the children's knowledge of words and build fluency.

During the small group lesson, not much technology was incorporated. Within the whole group, the teacher candidate created a power point that went along with a read along. The power point helped organize information from the book and gave students a visual representation of the facts in the book. The text was about the story of Betsy Ross and showed the commonalities and differences of the old and new flag. To incorporate technology in the lesson, the teacher candidate showed pictures of both the old flag and the new flag. Using the ELMO projector was also very common throughout the year. Many times the teacher candidate would demonstrate an assignment via ELMO. With this, the students were able to have a closer look at learning.

First Target Lesson

Going into the lesson, the teacher candidate felt well prepared and ready to present the material. However, once she actually started the lesson, it was much more difficult than anticipated. The children became easily distracted, but after a few attempts of getting them back

on track, they eventually began to listen. The lesson focused on the R-controlled vowel sounds. The teacher candidate assessed the students by instructing them to find examples used throughout the text. The assessment was observational and the students showed their findings on a dry erase board. They worked independently on finding their own examples. The group of children read at different speeds and the teacher candidate found it difficult to keep everyone on the same track.

Implementation of Instruction/Planning

Guided reading is a method used to directly teach reading skills to students. Typically done in a small group, guided reading focuses on the needs of each individual student. Teachers read with students and help guide the students' thoughts. Guided reading is done at the instructional level so the child has room for improvement yet does not become frustrated with the text. The goal of guided reading is for the students to develop reading independence. "During guided reading, teachers monitor student reading processes and check that texts are within students' grasps, allowing students to assemble their newly acquired skills into a smooth, integrated reading system (Clay, p.17)." The teacher candidate recorded notes while students were working or reading. Anecdotal records are an informal way to observe and take notes of the children's struggle areas or to see where that child had progressed.

Lesson Planning

The purpose of lesson planning is to be prepared to effectively teach a lesson. Lesson plans include objectives for the students that us BLOOMS Taxonomy in order for the lesson to be developmentally appropriate for the students. The components of a lesson plan include a mini lesson, a student reading time, a post-reading assessment, and a closing discussion over what had been taught. The topic of discussion is introduced through the mini lesson

where the teacher does most of the talking. Then the students will get to read the text to themselves keeping in mind what had been taught in the mini lesson. Then, the teacher will bring back the focus of the group to explain the pre-assessment. The objective must be measurable to see whether or not the lesson was successful. For each lesson, the teacher candidate would have some type of way to assess the students.

<div align="center">**Recording/Documentation of Assessment**</div>

Assessment is the process of testing knowledge to help build upon what is already known. Classrooms should not consist of assessing students. Assessments are not ways to teach and are not the ways in which students learn. But rather, assessments are the way of gathering information about the student in order to teach at a level of understanding. Assessments are also good for measuring the student's understanding and progress.

Pre-Assessment

To be able to teach, the educator must know where the students' stand in regards to the subject being taught. Some students might be more knowledgeable on a topic than others. It is impossible to teach on a developmentally appropriate level without first knowing what the child understands and does not understand. To acquire this information, it is necessary for teachers to perform a pre-assessment on individual students. Authors Harry Torrance and John Pryor say that, "Classroom-based formative assessment has been seen as a means of getting close to children's thinking and as a way of providing direct support and scaffolding for their development." Without assessing students prior to teaching, there is no way to measure where they are and where they should be. The teacher candidate assessed the small group based off three assessments. First, the Running Record, which looks at reading fluency and performance. The student reads and the teacher calculates how many words per minute the student read. From those words, the teacher will see how many miscues the student made. Looking at the miscues,

the teacher will see what percentage of correctness the student was capable of achieving. Knowing this percentage allows the teacher to know what level is too low and what level is too high. Then, the Quick Phonics Screener looks at phonological and phonemic awareness. It provides different spelling patterns and words for the student to read. Third, is Fry's Instant Sightword assessment. There are four groups of words and the student must read the section at 100 percent before moving on to the next group. All of these assessments should be done before and after teaching to see progression.

Ongoing Assessment

Children are growing and maturing at a rapid pace during their early lives. Their abilities one day might differ from the abilities the next. Assessments are used to measure the growth students achieve over time. Ongoing assessments are used to do the same, nevertheless, are less focused on the achievement of a student and more the progression of learning they have made. The teacher candidate made ongoing assessments for each lesson. After reading, the students would have an activity to complete that measured understanding of the lesson. For each lesson, the teacher candidate would also write anecdotal records and created a portfolio-like book that had each assessment chronologically organized to show a visual of the group's learning. According to Lynn Rhodes and Sally Mejia, believe that "…the open-ended nature of anecdotal records allows teachers to record the rich detail available in most observations of literacy processes and products." Taking anecdotal records is a quick and efficient way to assess children other than formally giving them a test. Having notes to refer back to also lets the teacher create lessons based off what the students already know.

Post-Assessment

Being able to determine whether or not students met the objective goals is very important. The students in the teacher candidate's group improved their reading skills over time. Before teaching, the students had many difficulties trying to read words. Throughout learning the different objectives, the students seemed to improve a little, and for the final post assessment, the students increased their scores in each assessment.

Impact on PK-12

The post assessment data did not quite meet the original expectations of the goals set by the teacher candidate. The students did improve and the chart below shows in which areas they did well or poorly on. At the beginning of the semester, the students had a lot of trouble reading and comprehending text. According to the Quick Phonics Screener assessment taken in January, the students have increased their scores in every section.

The lessons throughout the semester have also progressed with student understanding. The teacher candidate took the information from the assessments, such as the Quick Phonics Screener, and used it to refer back to and teach lessons based on the information on the assessment scores. Getting to know the students' interests and learning about what they know and do not know allows teachers to have the data needed to continue development with students.

Quick Phonics Screener
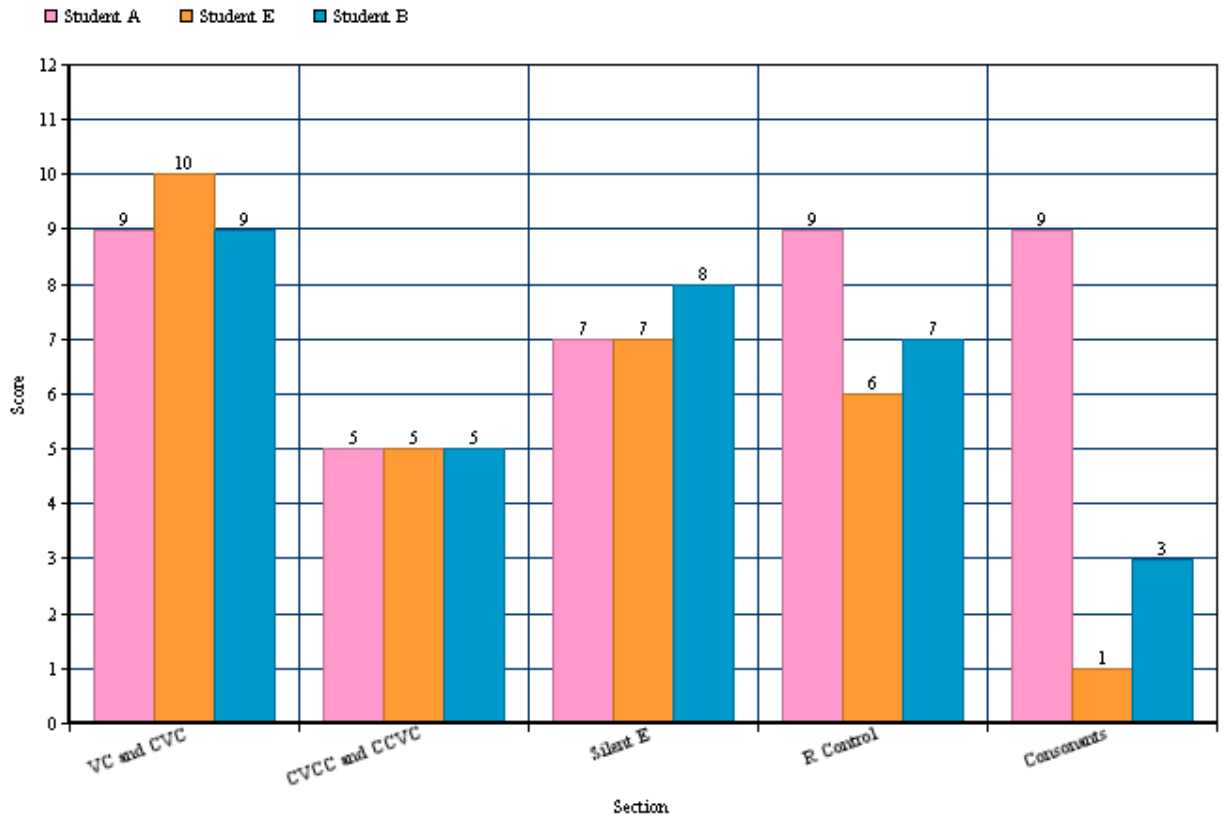
Future Plans

Each student, whether they had similar scores, is different and requires a different plan of action. For this particular group, the teacher candidate would suggest to incorporate reading within every subject area. Having opportunities to apply reading in every situation will give students ample practice to become fluent readers. According to the graph under the section "Impact on PK-12", the small group had main issues with consonants and silent /e/ patterned words. The group can benefit by learning how to code those types of words and read them back.

Shared reading and guided reading are two strategies that build reading fluency. To teach shared reading and guided reading, the teacher must introduce the book and conference

with the students words that were difficult to read and also ask what it was about. Ongoing assessments should be in place with these students so the teacher knows any areas of struggle to teach.

Conclusion

The teacher candidate had three students in her small group. The students had many commonalities in their reading. They struggled in the same areas. Most of the students showed progress with reading. It was a six week instructional period teaching the children three times per week. The teacher candidate pre-assessed her students to know how to build their schema. She also gave ongoing assessments within each lesson to keep track of their progress. And the teacher candidate also did a post-assessment for each student to measure progress of the students' learning.

There are many benefits of assessing, if done properly. Assessments should only be done to measure the progress of students in order to further instruction. The assessments done by the teacher candidate were summative and monitored progress. The teacher candidate chose to assess the students by testing the Instant Fry Words, Quick Phonics Screener, and the Running Record. There are many different other ways to assess the students though and can cover different areas of learning.

Reflection

Coming into the internship, I thought I knew majority of what it took to be a good teacher. Little did I know, there is so much more that goes into that vocation. I did not know how to discipline children, how to write a lesson plan, or how to create assessments. Throughout the semester of working directly with the students and also observing my mentor, I feel like I have a complete new perspective of teaching and one that is even more

positive than the one before. At the beginning of working with my small group, I felt as if my lessons were not beneficial and unorganized. However, after I got a better feel for the children and got to know them better, my lessons also improved. My mentor teacher, Mrs. XXXXXX, was an amazing influence on my experience of teaching. She demonstrated how to discipline the children, how to work with the children, and how to teach in a developmentally appropriate way. She was always very honest when it came to what all is required in teaching.

Reflecting back on the past few months, my professional development has increased substantially. I feel more confident with my ability to assess children and monitor their progress. This semester is one that has prepared me to actually teach. This semester has been demanding, but rewarding. There was never a dull moment with the students which caused me to constantly stay on my toes. I am very aware, however, that even though I have came a long way in my professional growth, I still have a lot left to learn. I am beyond excited to continue working with children and gain more practice in the field.

References

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Marzano, Robert. (2003). What Works in Schools. Retrieved on May 5, 2015. Retrieved from

http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/102271/chapters/Introducing-the-Best-of-

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Purkey, William W. and Strahan, David B. (2004). *Inviting positive classroom discipline.* P. 65.

Key Assignment 2: Advocacy Work Sample (ECH 432)

Advocacy Project Brochure

Lobbying

What is lobbying?

Lobbying is the act of attempting to influence business and government leaders to create legislation or conduct an activity that will help a particular organization.

How lobbying can affect our education program

There may be instances where individuals do not agree with the laws of education. They have the right to try to influence law makers and those around them to see their point of view of what laws should be passed.

What are some education laws that people lobby?

There are many laws that

Choose the best answer:
○ a. test
● b. teach

Resources:
- http://www.nea.org/home/4310 2.htm
- http://www.texasobserver.org/m other-against-standardized-testing/

lobbyist believe should or should not be in place. The first is No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). There are people who lobby for or against it. National Education Association lobbyist Eric Duncan says, "NCLB has failed to reach or even approach its key goal of closing achievement gaps... But what changes? That may depend on what members of Congress and Senators hear from you." Duncan is lobbying against the No Child Left Behind Act, but makes a very valid point. Not all law makers will be willing to listen, but it is a lobbyist's job to pursue law makers and find someone who is willing to hear from them.

Advocacy Project Presentation Link (The Video has since been taken down)

Youtube Link to Presentation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBEggFwq-DU&list=UUNBFK359wLd157FUFWgxjWQ

Advocacy Project Presentation Example (Unrelated to Brochure and Reflection)

Youtube Link to Presentation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2vQc9tT1l4

Advocacy Project Reflection

How you addressed your issue

      I addressed the issue of lobbying and telling why it is important that we are still able to lobby. Lobbying is the act of attempting to influence business and government leaders to create legislation or conduct an activity that will help a particular organization. If we were not able to lobby, then teachers would not have as much influence as they do on law makers. When budget cuts were made a few years ago, teachers were very upset. In result, these teachers would support candidates for legislation who were opposed to the budget cuts. A big area that many teachers lobby against is the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). Teachers of all grade levels do not want the STAAR in place. They say it will cause too much stress and anxiety on students, teachers, and school administrations. Not all teachers disagree with the STAAR so they will support candidates who are for keeping the STAAR testing in place. One last area that teachers lobby is the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). There are teachers that are for or against this act and will support candidates that are for or against keep it in play. There is a chance that lobbyist will go to the capital and try to influence law makers to

Who you presented your video and brochure to

      I presented my video and brochure to the Farmersville Intermediate School principal Mrs. Johnson. She was already very informed on the topic of lobbying as principals should be. After watching the video and reading the brochure we talked about her stance on topics which she asked me not to share when writing my paper. She did tell me how important it is for me to know the laws that are in effect today and laws that may come into effect, and really look at what candidates are trying to pass. She told me that people tend to just listen to one part and not all the aspects of a law being passed.

How you presented your information

        I presented my information by providing a definition of what lobbying means and how lobbyist can affect if a law is passed or not, or if a law needs to be repealed. I provided pictures that shows lobbyist at work. I also provided examples of lobbying in the education field that specifically focuses on elementary education. In the video I talked about how lobbying has made influences on education and how we should never stop lobbying if as educators believe that a law does or does not benefit the growth of students.

The impact of your presentation

        I feel that my video would make an impact on how people look at lobbying and how important it is in education.

How this presentation could lead to a change in law or policy

        This presentation could lead to a change in law or policy by allowing others to see that if they do not agree with a law they could go to the capital and lobby against it. Also that they could lobby that law makers create a law that benefits the education of children. If teachers really disagree with a law or think that a specific law needs to be made they should find other individuals that agree and try to influence businesses or government officials to support their cause.

Your thoughts concerning your advocacy project

        My final thoughts concerning lobbying are that it is an approach should appreciate the influence that we as teachers can make on government officials and businesses. I was interested to learn about some of the big laws in place that are very controversial like the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and what lobbyist have done to influence law makers. I have seen how passionate some teachers are about specific laws and what they feel

should be in place. Teachers and other people have the power to influence those around them, and I think it is great how knowledgeable they are of what they believe.

Your future plans for this advocacy issue

My future plans for lobbying is that I will be knowledgeable of laws that are in place, laws that are going to be in place, and laws that should be put into place. My job is to see which laws benefit students and support them. If I believe that law makers should put a specific law into place, then I need to make that known and try to influence those law makers.