

ITT trainees

Activity 1

Planning lessons

Introduction

In this activity you will look at a scenario that includes a sketch of a lesson, and consider the sorts of ideas you might use to remove barriers for a pupil with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in such a lesson.

There are primary and secondary versions of the activity. The lessons, and the descriptions of the pupils, have been chosen to illustrate concerns about learning and teaching for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities that you need to reflect on, particularly in relation to communication. They will not be entirely appropriate to every educational context.

The activity is divided into sections, and can either be used in one go, or one section at a time at different points during a placement.

You need to:

- 1 Look at the sketch of the lesson and the description of the pupil
- 2 Complete the blank column of the table with your ideas for making sure the pupil is included in the lesson
- 3 Compare your ideas with what actually happened in the lesson
- 4 Consider preparing a lesson to include pupils with SEN and/or disabilities working within a context/curriculum area that is familiar to you

Primary activity

1 Look at the sketch of the lesson and the description of the pupil

Primary lesson plan: English/science work on the life cycle of the butterfly

- Presentation of intended learning outcomes.
- Whole-class reminder: characteristics that distinguish common insects from each other – for example, some insects are winged, others are not. The teacher holds up names of two insects on cards. Pupils respond on distinctions. The teaching assistant, at the front, then holds up a large picture of the insect.
- The teacher introduces vocabulary for the lesson – egg, caterpillar, pupa, butterfly – and then shows a short film of the life cycle of a butterfly.
- Each pupil in a small group chooses a stage from the life cycle and prepares **one** remark that an egg, or a caterpillar, pupa or butterfly might say about its past, present or future state. So the caterpillar might say: "I like all the food I have on this leaf." The butterfly might say: "Phew, glad to be out of that dark pupa."
- The whole class hear each group present their life cycle sayings.
- The pupils note their favourite sayings for each stage in the life cycle.
- Evaluation against learning outcomes.

Primary school pupil: Selwyn

Selwyn is in year 3 of his mainstream primary school. He has been identified as having moderate learning difficulties and is working at level 1 of the National Curriculum for speaking and listening.

He greatly enjoys sequencing exercises and drawing that involves making patterns. His coordination is relatively good, and he enjoys football and likes Arsenal and his Arsenal shirt very much. He has an excellent relationship with his teaching assistant.

His reading age is three years below his chronological age. He finds spoken instructions difficult and does not enjoy speaking in a large group.

He sometimes forgets tasks he has been set and often loses concentration.

2 How would you support Selwyn? (Complete the table below and on next page)

Primary	Your ideas	
<p>Presentation of learning outcomes: exploring the life cycle of a butterfly.</p>	<p>How, if at all, would you differentiate the lesson's intended learning outcomes for Selwyn?</p>	
<p>Whole-class reminder on distinguishing characteristics of common insects.</p> <p>Teacher holds up names of two insects on cards and pupils respond with the distinguishing characteristics.</p>	<p>How would you ensure Selwyn can contribute to the discussion?</p> <p>What resources were available to Selwyn?</p>	
<p>The teacher introduces vocabulary – egg, caterpillar, pupa, butterfly – then shows a short film of the life cycle of butterflies.</p>	<p>How would you support Selwyn in this phase of the lesson?</p>	
<p>Class work in small groups. Each pupil in a group chooses a stage from the life cycle and prepares one remark that an egg, caterpillar, pupa or butterfly might say about its past, present or future state.</p>	<p>How would you group the pupils for this activity?</p> <p>What would be the role of the teaching assistant?</p> <p>Any strategies you might use to support Selwyn?</p>	

Primary	Your ideas	
<p>The whole class listen to each group presenting their life cycle sayings.</p> <p>The pupils note their favourite sayings for each stage in the life cycle.</p>	<p>How would you support Selwyn in joining in and recording?</p>	
<p>Evaluation against learning outcomes.</p>	<p>How would you ensure Selwyn could evaluate his success effectively in the lesson?</p>	
<p>Scope for including ideas relating to the pupil's strengths and interests.</p>	<p>What might you include that relates to Selwyn's strengths and interests?</p>	

Primary	Your ideas	
<p>The whole class listen to each group presenting their life cycle sayings.</p> <p>The pupils note their favourite sayings for each stage in the life cycle.</p>	<p>How would you support Selwyn in joining in and recording?</p>	<p>The teacher and teaching assistant encouraged him to use his symbols and text card record to prepare a saying for the plenary discussion.</p> <p>Selwyn's buddy made a note of the sayings that they both liked and they worked together to make an audiotape of their favourites.</p>
<p>Evaluation against learning outcomes.</p>	<p>How would you ensure Selwyn could evaluate his success effectively in the lesson?</p>	<p>The school uses a 'traffic light' system for pupils to evaluate their own progress. Selwyn's use of this is not very secure, so the teaching assistant checked with him on how he feels things have gone.</p>
<p>Scope for including ideas relating to the pupil's strengths and interests.</p>	<p>What might you include that relates to Selwyn's strengths and interests?</p>	<p>The teacher and teaching assistant encouraged Selwyn to create patterns and sequences of drawings of the life cycle of the butterfly. All his butterflies and caterpillars wore Arsenal colours.</p>

4 How would you prepare a lesson in your subject/curriculum area to support Selwyn?

Think about how you got on. These points are worth noting:

- Intended learning outcomes sometimes need narrowing in scope, or sometimes developing to emphasise a particular target of the pupil, rather than 'tracking back' to earlier material.
- Questions to pupils with learning difficulties should not be **too** easy, though they should be carefully planned to be understood.
- Pupil grouping should make use of the variety of possibilities available over a sequence of lessons. Ability grouping for long periods is likely to be counter-productive for those always in the low-attaining group.
- The role of the teaching assistant is planned to allow the pupils independence and support.

Now:

- Put one of your lessons into the template above and consider how you might support a pupil with special educational needs and/or disabilities, by completing the table.
- Ask the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) or another experienced colleague to discuss with you their approach to differentiating lessons.

However you follow up the activity, make sure you have some notes on useful ideas to adopt to develop your work in the classroom. There will always be a number of ways of doing things. It is very important that after a lesson you reflect on what works with a pupil, to help you plan the next lesson.

Secondary activity

1 Read through the sketch of the lesson and then look at the short description of the student

Secondary lesson plan: English

Analysing the presentation of information on posters, websites etc

- Presentation of intended learning outcomes
- Whole-class discussion – points to look for in a poster or website page
- Introduction to the task
- Small group work – analysis of the messages on a poster
- Groups move to tell other groups of their conclusions
- Whole-class discussion of conclusions
- Evaluation against intended learning outcomes

Secondary school student: Angela

Angela is in year 8 of her mainstream secondary school. She has been identified as having moderate learning difficulties and is working at level 3 of the National Curriculum for speaking and listening.

She has excellent relationships with the teaching assistant and a regular buddy, Tina, and will chat readily to the small group of friends and adults she knows. She greatly enjoys an Australian soap opera on TV.

Her reading age is three years below her chronological age. Her writing is slow, even on the laptop she enjoys using, and her coordination is not very good. She has a poor memory for adult instructions and has problems with personal organisation.

2 How would you support Angela? (Complete the table below and on next page)

Secondary	Your ideas	
<p>Presentation of intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>Distinguish between fact and opinions.</p> <p>Show writers' arguments and comment on how they are developed.</p> <p>Understand and comment on how information is presented.</p> <p>Understand and evaluate how writers use language and structure.</p> <p>Select material according to purpose and collate and compare material from different sources.</p>	<p>How, if at all, would you differentiate the lesson's intended learning outcomes for Angela?</p>	
<p>Introduction to the task.</p> <p>Whole-class discussion; points to look for in a poster or website page.</p>	<p>How would you ensure Angela can contribute to the discussion?</p>	
<p>Small group work: analysis of the messages on a poster.</p> <p>Groups move to tell other groups of their conclusions.</p>	<p>How would you group the students for this activity?</p> <p>What would be the role of the teaching assistant?</p> <p>Any strategies you might use to support Angela?</p>	

Secondary**Your ideas**

Whole-class discussion of results.

How would you encourage Angela to join in and remember key points from the lesson?

Evaluation against learning outcomes.

How would you ensure Angela could evaluate her success effectively in the lesson?

Scope for including ideas relating to the student's strengths and interests.

What might you include that relates to Angela's strengths and interests?

3 What happened in the lesson? (Look at what the teacher did)

Secondary	Your ideas	
<p>Presentation of intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>Distinguish between fact and opinions.</p> <p>Show writers' arguments and comment on how they are developed.</p> <p>Understand and comment on how information is presented.</p> <p>Understand and evaluate how writers use language and structure.</p> <p>Select material according to purpose and collate and compare material from different sources.</p>	<p>How, if at all, would you differentiate the lesson's intended learning outcomes for Angela?</p>	<p>The teacher and the teaching assistant narrowed the range of concepts to be learnt to a group they felt would fit with Angela's targets for the half-term.</p>
<p>Introduction to the task.</p> <p>Whole-class discussion; points to look for in a poster or website page.</p>	<p>How would you ensure Angela can contribute to the discussion?</p>	<p>The teacher asked the teaching assistant to go through the task with Angela beforehand, making sure that she understood the key ideas. She was then able to join in when asked a question.</p> <p>The teacher made sure that she framed her questions to Angela carefully. She used words that were appropriate for her understanding. The questions were not overloaded with content, but challenged Angela a little. The teacher had noted the questions she was going to use on her planning sheet.</p>

Secondary		Your ideas
<p>Small group work: analysis of the messages on a poster.</p> <p>Groups move to tell other groups of their conclusions.</p>	<p>How would you group the students for this activity?</p> <p>What would be the role of the teaching assistant?</p> <p>Any strategies you might use to support Angela?</p>	<p>The students were in mixed-ability groups, with Tina, Angela's buddy, working with her.</p> <p>The teaching assistant sat between Angela's group and another one, helping both groups and making sure Angela was able to participate at each stage.</p> <p>Angela had access to a laptop to record her conclusions. The teaching assistant set this up before the lesson with some word-processing software that Angela knows well, which incorporates text and symbols.</p>
<p>Whole-class discussion of results.</p>	<p>How would you encourage Angela to join in and remember key points from the lesson?</p>	<p>Angela used her 'log' of the lesson on her laptop to help her remember key points. Her buddy supported her in preparing her comments on the lesson.</p>
<p>Evaluation against learning outcomes.</p>	<p>How would you ensure Angela could evaluate her success effectively in the lesson?</p>	<p>Angela gave her view of her understanding through the 'traffic light' system that is used across the school. She also discussed her feelings about the lesson with the teaching assistant, during the lesson and afterwards.</p>
<p>Scope for including ideas relating to the student's strengths and interests.</p>	<p>What might you include that relates to Angela's strengths and interests?</p>	<p>The teacher made sure that one of the websites visited in the introduction was from a soap she knew Angela watched.</p>

4 How would you prepare a lesson in your subject/curriculum area to support Angela?

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- Student grouping should make use of the variety of possibilities available over a sequence of lessons. Ability grouping for long periods is likely to be counter-productive for those always in the low-attaining group.
- The role of the teaching assistant is planned to allow the students independence and support.

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