EDT 313 Developmentally Appropriate Practice for Preschool

Investigation Assignment

(see www.project-approach.com)

PHASE 1

Select a science topic that is worthy of investigation

1. Observe children to determine possible areas of interest. Be prepared to share your observation notes and rationale with the instructor during the midterm meeting. Make sure that you share your ideas about possible science topics with your mentor teacher.

2. Share possible science topics with Dr. Adams during class on 1/31.

3. Use the Abbreviated Lesson Plan to plan and implement an opening event or “Hook Activity” to determine if you can spark enough interest about the topic of investigation that children will become engaged. Discuss this with your mentor teacher ahead of time and share your lesson plan the week before you implement it. During the hook activity, use the EKWQ method described on the Project Approach website to generate a list of questions that represent what the children want to learn about the topic. Bring the lesson plan and children’s questions or web to the midterm meeting with your instructor.

4. Develop a topic web also know as an “Anticipatory Planning Web”. See samples of “topic webs” on the Project Approach website. Also see the scoring criteria for this assignment. Share this with your mentor teacher and bring this to the midterm meeting with your instructor.

5. Get your investigation approved by your mentor teacher using the Topic Approval Sheet provided in the assignment packet and bring this to midterm meeting with your instructor.

6. Research the science content that will be covered in your investigation to verify that you know the content and can accurately expressed it in the lesson. Turn these in with the Science Content Rubric on 2/19.

7. Once your topic is definite, one partner is to write a parent letter to introduce both partners and your topic. Explain what the children will be learning and invite parents to participate. This is to be professionally written and error free. Your mentor teacher must approve the letter before it is disseminated to the children’s families. This must be completed for dissemination in week 6 and turned in on the date indicated on the course calendar.

Pre/Post Assessment of ELCS, Science Content and Development: Finding out what children know and are ready to learn

1. Collect whole class pre-assessment data related to the ELCS- Use the sample check sheets distributed in class or devices that are being used in the lab experience classroom to guide you as you collect data to get an idea of what children know and are able to do. Divide the content areas and developmental domains evenly between the 2 partners. Shift between collecting assessment data and working with children while at your lab experience. You
will need to present your whole class pre-assessment data to the class on 2/21. See the Assessment Demo Rubric. Be sure to collect data on both the ELCS and on developmental domains. You can use the children’s web or list of questions that were generated during the hook activity as a pre-assessment of science content.

2. Collect work samples, digital pictures and anecdotes that document what the children have learned about the science topic of investigation, the ELCS and developmental domains. This documentation will become part of the final poster display. Be sure that the answers to the children’s questions are clearly displayed.

3. Prepare a chart or graph of what the whole class has learned. Start with the pre-assessment data and also record post assessment data that demonstrates what children learned across the course of the investigation. Be sure to indicate which partner collected the data for each content area and domain of development. This will be part of the final poster display.

The Investigation

1. Work with your mentor teacher to set the stage for investigation by adjusting the classroom environment, if possible, and selecting materials that are authentic, safe, and extremely enticing to children. Materials should relate to the topic of study, be open-ended, and promote development across domains. Be creative in designing a means of storing your reusable materials when the topic is done. Include pictures of your environment and documentation to demonstrate that you have met these requirements. Include as many of your materials as possible with your final poster display.

2. Create a curriculum web by re-examining your anticipatory planning web and children’s web/list of questions. Focus on the sections that reflect what you actually plan to do with the children and link the web to ELCS, science content concepts, developmental domains, and the questions that the children identified for investigation. Be sure to include opportunities for art, music and movement which can be integrated as a content area on lesson plans. The curriculum web will be turned in as part of your final poster display.

3. Write abbreviated lesson plans for the 4 academic content areas (2 per individual, 4 per team). These plans are turned in for individual grades (see course calendar for due date).

4. Have your lesson plans approved at least one week before you plan to implement them. Take pictures of the lessons and include them on your final poster display.

PHASE 2

1. As part of your final poster display, include a section on field work. What are the possibilities for field work related to your topic of investigation? Include information about possible field trips as well as methods of bringing “the field” into the classroom. Are their possibilities for field work in or close to the school/center grounds? It is understood that field trips may not be possible for a variety of reasons, however, each team is to include a section on the possible field trips and field related activities that would support learning related to your topic of investigation.
PHASE 3: Concluding the Project

1. Write a follow-up parent letter describing what the children accomplished during the investigation. This is to be professionally written and error free. Your mentor teacher must approve the letter before it is disseminated to the children’s families at the end of your lab experience. See the parent letter rubric for more instructions. This is an individual grade. One team member should write the introductory letter and the other should write this follow-up letter. **Turn this assignment in on the date indicated** on the course calendar.

2. As part of your **final poster display**, include a description of possible “culminating activities” associated with your topic of investigation. It is understood that your time is limited in your field site and that it may not be possible to actually do a culminating activity with the children. You should, however, research and include a description of possible culminating activities. See [www.project-approach.com](http://www.project-approach.com) for more information.