

**A CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH
TO TEACHING HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

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Introduction

This capstone portfolio will display how my thinking and teaching has been influenced by the courses I have taken in my graduate program as well as the new and current information that I have researched for this capstone paper. The learning theory that I most closely identify with would be the constructivist theory. I believe that students do construct knowledge and as an educator it is my job to guide them in this process. In the constructivist theory the teacher, student and classroom environment play major roles in learning. Another significant portion of this portfolio involves curriculum development and assessment, both of which are critical with this theory. I will also research the use of technology, and how a constructivist like myself can use technology to benefit my students and allow them to experiment and explore as well as achieving success. Also in this portfolio I will research different ways that I can adapt my teaching in order to meet the diverse needs of my students. Students come from many different backgrounds, cultures, and have cognitive, language, and gender differences as well. Another aspect that I will research will be the challenges that a physical educator teacher faces with students with disabilities. In my profession this is the most challenging for me. I will also look at the role that parents, family, community, school administrators and other teachers play in order for students to reach their full potential. This portfolio will also display work that I developed for classes in the educational technology program as well as lessons, slide shows, tests, and student work that have been developed in my teachings.

Learning Theory

I am a firm believer that my students in physical education and health learn in a constructivist environment. A major part of what I do is to incorporate strategies and challenge students to explore many opportunities before forming conclusions. Constructivism is first of all a theory of learning based on the idea that knowledge is constructed by the knower based on mental activity. Constructivism is based on the work of the Swiss developmental psychologist Jean Piaget. Piaget's theory of Cognitive Development proposes that humans cannot be "given" information, which they immediately understand, and use. Instead humans must "Construct" their own knowledge. In constructivism it is important to provide a rich environment for spontaneous exploration of the child. In constructivism they build their knowledge through experience (Gagnon & Collay, 1996). Constructivism is a way of thinking about knowing, a referent for building models of teaching, learning and curriculum (Tobin & Tippin, 1993). In this sense it is a learning philosophy and it may also become a teaching philosophy.

Student Learning

I teach physical education and health, and even in these disciplines it is possible to incorporate a constructivist classroom. In physical education using a student-centered, inquiry based approaches to teaching team sports and games (Light & Walliam, 2008). In physical education it is very easy for students to construct new knowledge through the use of a manipulative or practice. By providing an environment that allows the students to foster knowledge through practice this will allow the students to explore the many option in order to reach a goal. In my classroom I like to provide my students with many

hands on opportunities, so that they can acquire the knowledge necessary in order to complete a task. I believe I am very lucky, that in my role as a teacher I see my students from preschool until grade eight. In this setting it is satisfying to see students progress with their tasks as they develop with age. Even with young children it is important to see how they problem solve when given a task that they are not familiar with. For example, to my surprise not all pre-school students know how to dribble a basketball, but given a few key instructions and practice of the skill, most will start to dribble with success within a few minutes. This progression continues as the students move through the grades and the ability to dribble a basketball is second nature.

Also in my role as a health teacher I provide my students with opportunities to construct their own learning. After learning about PowerPoint slide shows in EDU-577 I developed a unit plan which is the development of a slide show for eighth grade health education students. Artifact 1 explains how the students will research and develop a PowerPoint slide show. The development of a slide show allows students to research a topic and develop a presentation with the gathered information. In order to display the students work I have also included Artifact 3, which is a PowerPoint slide show developed currently by one of my grade eight students. In this slide show, the students focus on the importance of food and nutrition, and the dangers of eating disorders. Another unit plan that I developed for EDU-582 which incorporates the use of technology will also be one of my artifacts (Artifact 2). In Artifact 2 I incorporate the use of technology in health and physical education. This plan displays some elements of how students can be given a task and work hands on to develop a result. A more specific example would be in lesson four of the unit plan where students are given pedometers

(step counters) as we take a hike on a nearby trail. After the hike the students' analyze the data (steps taken) and correlate that to the amount of calories burned during the hike. By providing these opportunities for students this allows them to acquire knowledge that they can use throughout their lives. Unit plan is described in [Artifact 2](#).

Role of the Teacher

Teachers need to recognize how people use their own experiences, prior knowledge and perceptions, as well as their physical and interpersonal environments to construct knowledge and meaning. The goal is to produce a democratic classroom environment that provides meaningful learning experiences for autonomous learners (Lindfors 1993). The role of the teacher in a constructivist classroom is to move around the room, coaching students, providing feedback on their ideas, and managing the structure of the class. Most important, the teacher is a learner too (Dimock, 1998)! By providing the students with a task and then allowing them to work with other students or on their own, the students will develop a solution to a problem or skill with guidance. This will develop an understanding and allow students to store information so that it can be retrieved later on in life.

Role of the Student

The role of the student in a constructivist classroom would be that each individual structures his or her own knowledge of the world in a unique pattern... in a subjective way (Abbot & Ryan, 1999). Students want to develop their own understanding of how things work. When given a task and allowing students to generate ideas and knowledge the students strive to construct a solution to a problem. I believe that students benefit from hands on learning and that most students learn by doing. If we as teachers provide

an environment that allows students to learn based on cognitive theory information will be stored for future use. If we allow students to experiment, take risks, and challenge them many students will answer this call and thrive in the educational setting. The role of the students is also to be open to new ideas and information. Students must leave their comfort zone and try new experience. In order to gain knowledge students must be willing to try new tasks and possibly work with other students in order to achieve success individually or as a group.

Classroom Environment

In the classroom environment the classroom must be an introduction of overachieving concept followed by expansion of individual components. Knowledge is compiled through active dialogue between students and teacher. Group interaction is encouraged to foster negotiation among students. Value is placed on the process of learning through experience and interaction. Learning occurs as students gain exposure to a variety of individual perspectives. Construction of knowledge is based upon a comprehensive view of learning. And student- centered learning is the essence. Through this learning design teachers can allow students to be constructors of their own desired outcomes.

Constructivist classrooms are structured so that learners are immersed in experiences within which they may engage in meaning-making inquiry, action, imagination, invention, interaction, hypothesizing, and personal reflection (Lindfors 1993).

Curriculum Development

In physical education and health I believe that constructivist learning plays a major role in my curriculum development and implementation. Curriculum development refers to the goals or targets for instruction. There are many different realms of curriculum

development as we discussed in class a few nights ago. At Pomfret Community School we have a board approved physical education and health curriculum that is designed to be a tool to build and use in my programs. Pomfret Community School has instituted what they believe is the intended curriculum based upon the state of Connecticut standards. I have developed the ideal curriculum that is used to benefit both the students and myself. I develop my lessons so that my students are able to explore and achieve. My goal as a physical educator is that my students develop skill and exercise programs that they can use throughout their lives. In the constructivist classroom the teacher's role is to prompt and facilitate discussion. Thus the teacher's main focus should be on guiding students by asking questions that will lead them to develop their own conclusion on the subject. I personally try to do this by implementing lessons that allow my students to play games in which they develop a strategy and carry out a plan. Also in the team sports I allow the students the freedom to work as a group and develop plans for the team. A lot of what we do now in the physical education curriculum is based on cooperative games. These games emphasize participation, challenge and fun rather than defeating someone. Cooperative games emphasize play rather than competition (Fluegelman, 1981). In health education I like to allow the students some freedom to complete tasks as I model and coach them along. By allowing students to construct their own opinion on an article or project or group work, I hope to provide the constructivist theory in my curriculum development and lessons in health education as well.

Curriculum Assessment

When I start to talk about assessment in physical education I have a broad scope of how I assess my students. It seems that performance-based assessment is now

commonplace in many classrooms as more teachers become concerned about the authenticity of their assessment and how assessment information can be used as formative feedback to improve teaching and learning (Frey & Schmitt, 2007). I myself don't think that this is the way to assess students in physical education and health. My assessment in physical education is based upon effort, participation and attitude. I always prefer the student who tries hard and who makes a conscious effort to improve as apposed to the "great athlete". In artifact 4 I have included an assessment tool that I use to evaluate my grade eight students in a badminton unit. This tool helps me to evaluate their progress, and can be used throughout the unit. The assessment that I have included is an actual assessment of a student. My assessment in physical education is mainly subjective. I look for a progression of learning. I am fortunate that I see my students from pre-k – grade eight. Because of this my evaluation of progression can be accurate. At the beginning of each unit I preassess the students, and at the end of the unit a post assessment Artifact 4. In health education I want my students to learn the importance of the information that is presented, because health and wellness affects them throughout their lives. My goal in my health education classes is that my students think about the topics and develop logical answers. I make a conscious effort in my teaching to work with my students to achieve success. If a student gives me the wrong answer I will never tell them "No" I will work with the student and the class to develop the correct answer. In health education I use standardized test to assess students along with group and individual projects. Using the tests I make sure that if a student get a wrong answer on a test, it's not just wrong. I work with the students to develop the correct answer so that they have an understanding of what is correct, not just that they got something wrong.

Just telling students that they got something wrong is of no benefit to the students. They need to know why they got something wrong and then correct it.

Technology and student Learning

Technology as a tool for both physical education and health is very important to me. Educational technology plays an important role in meeting the goals and objectives of a project-based learning and facilitates the students' exploration and reflection on the content (Juniu, 2006). Incorporating video gaming as an untapped resource for enhancing motivation and sports participation on young people is essential (Hayes, 2007). My students use video games on the Sony playstation as well as the Nintendo wii. On the playstation they play a game called Dance Dance Revolution, to encourage them to dance and have fun doing so. Students in today's society grow up with video games, and when they see them in a school system they are blown away. Today's video games incorporate exercise unlike games of the past. I have also incorporated the Nintendo wii system which has a wii fit component to the game system. Using this, the students participate in fitness in a virtual video game. The students really enjoy the video games, and they are getting exercise at the same time, so for me it's a win, win situation.

Technology as a tool in both physical education and health is essential. As I spoke about previously in my paper, I have students develop a power point slide show. Before they complete their slide show I take a few minutes to show a slide show I designed for EDU-624 on plagiarism. Artifact 5 displays the slide show that I developed on plagiarism. I use this for my health education students before they develop their slide show on a health related topic, but I have given permission to other teacher to use it with their students in other classes.

I find that technology motivates students and allows them to take an active role in their learning. In physical education and health I like to allow my students to actively participate in their wellness. I use a web cite to convert the number of step that the students take into calories burned. This is a very effective teaching tool. I use this with my students when I give them pedometers (step counters) for a lesson or unit. For a lesson or a unit we will calculate the amount of calories burned during exercise and the steps allow a visual account of the exercise they are getting.

Physical education should provide opportunities for students to participate in activity that promotes fitness and well-being. Implementing best practices into the physical education curriculum can contribute to the understanding and application of a healthy lifestyle for students. Technology applied in the physical education curriculum can provide an opportunity for improved instruction and enhanced student learning in physical education (Thornburg & Hill, 2004). There is no doubt in my mind that in today's day in age that technology can and should be used in physical education and health. I know from experience that incorporating technology in physical education motivates my students as well as sustains their attention for longer periods of time. Every student benefits from the use of technology in any subject area.

Classroom and Curriculum Differences

I know that I am consistently adapting my teaching from class to class, from week to week, as well as adapting for individual student needs. In the educational setting other than teaching, teachers must be able to adapt to situations that may present themselves from day to day or even in the middle of a teaching situation. As a teacher I frequently change the curriculum of what I do in physical education and health to meet the needs of

my students. Because I see on average about nine classes a day with about twenty different students in each class, I have to make appropriate changes to accommodate a various range of students. In a given week I probably address every part of capstone question three. This is actually something that I enjoy about my profession. For me it keeps things interesting and allows me to meet the needs of my students in the best way that I can.

Cognitive Differences

In many of my classes I have students who on a cognitive level are different from their peers. That is one of the things that I find interesting about teaching, the broad range of cognitive differences among students. The problem that arises with me sometimes is the students with intelligence test scores between 70 and 85 frequently fall into a gap between general and special education. Students with borderline intellectual functioning are a large population at-risk for school failure (Shaw, 2008). I come across this all the time and I do everything I can to help these students. The problem is that sometimes it's not enough, and sometimes I just can't devote enough time to so few students. In health education especially, which is in the classroom, and tests are taken and information is presented and discussed, I sometimes look at these students and know that they do not fully understand what is going on. I have no support for these students, because the 1's and TA's generally take their breaks when special education students are in "specials". The responsibility is for me to modify what these students learn and what I expect from them so that they can achieve success.

Cultural Differences

Overall I don't have many students with cultural differences. But this does not mean that I am not aware of how different cultures function. My stance on culture is that as an educator I have to be sensitive and supportive to how my students dress and act as well as being sensitive to religious beliefs. Teachers are supposed to be models for students so operating a classroom in any other way would have an adverse effect on certain students, and would provide them with a learning environment that would be less than desirable. However physical education in the United States is very different than it may be in other countries and cultures. [Artifact 6](#) displays a PowerPoint slide show that I developed for EDU-553. In the slide show I compare physical education in the United States to physical education in India. This slide show was very helpful to me because it gave me a different perspective as well as insight and knowledge about a different culture.

Language Differences

In my nine years of teaching I have only had a few students with language differences. In these instances I would try to communicate on a common ground, or even find a few words that I could use with them to help them in class. In physical education it has been a little less challenging. Sports, activities and games seem to translate in any language. The best practice I have found would be to have students watch or model other students during the activity. Overall with sports, activities and games no matter what language you speak students will most likely be able to participate with success.

Ethnic Differences

As a school population we have many students from many different ethnic backgrounds. It seems in a school setting or at least in my classes that ethnicity does not

play a dominant role as far as differences are concerned. Students can come from many different ethnic backgrounds, but in health and physical education it seems that education brings the cultures together. To be honest I'm not sure what happens outside of my class or outside of the school but ethnicity doesn't seem to be an issue in my setting.

Gender Differences

Studies show that gender differences among students as well as with students and teachers have an impact on student interactions. Previous research conducted in both classroom and physical education settings has examined the impact of student gender on teacher- student interactions. The purpose of this study was to extend the line of research by analyzing the influence of student gender and different types of physical activity on the frequency and nature of teacher interactions patterns toward boys and girls (Nicaise, 2007). In health and physical education I have both boys and girls in class together. We have no classes that are separated by gender. The way that I approach my students is that they are students, not boys or girls. I do understand that there are major differences in boys and girls, but in order to be successful, I think you just have to treat them all as students, and understand each student individually.

Socioeconomic Differences

This is something that in a school system you don't really think about. In Pomfret we have a very low poverty rate of about 2.7%. But socioeconomic status plays a huge role in a school system. Studies have been done that show that low socioeconomic status along with improper nutritional status lead to deficiency illness and problems such as malnourishment and obesity (Freeman, 1980). This lack of proper nutrition along with other aspects of low socioeconomic status can lead to student failure. Socioeconomic

status in a school can also determine how a child is received. As an educator I look beyond socioeconomic status as an indicator of my students. At the same time if I see a student in need I will try to do what I can to help that student or students if I can in a small way. Socioeconomic status ideally shouldn't play a role in education, but unfortunately in different towns and cities it does.

Challenging Conditions

In health and physical education I do get my share of challenging conditions with my students. I do my best to modify and adapt skills and equipment so that all of my students participate, and are provided with exercise and have success at their own level. Educators must be more proactive in teaching students with disabilities in order to provide inclusion and the benefits of physical education in the educational setting (Hardin, 2005). Adapted physical education is a profession of its own. But a physical education teacher in a public school system with no adapted physical education program must learn how to adapt and modify instruction and equipment so that students with disabilities are provided with the benefits they deserve. I am a very strong believer that all students should have the opportunity to be successful in physical education regardless of handicap.

Parent and Family Collaboration

It is generally positive when a parent or family wants to be involved in a child education. Research has been done to support the importance of family and school as part of a health and nutrition promotion. Family- school collaboration related to children's physical development has become increasingly important as childhood obesity rates continue to rise (Hoffman, 2008). Parents and family members who take an active role in the health and wellness of children are essential to the child's development. At

Pomfret Community School we have a school wellness committee, which consists of staff, parents, administrators, and students. Together we work to improve the children's health and nutrition.

Community Participation

The community can be a great resource when presenting information to students. There may be a business, zoo, museum, or community leader that may be a great resource for classroom field trips, or presentations. I am lucky because we have a state forest very close to the school. This allows myself and other staff the ability to take students for hikes. Classroom teachers use this opportunity to introduce rivers, streams, and ecosystems.

School Administrators

School administrators are generally willing to help teachers adapt curriculum and classrooms to meet the needs of all students. Administrators generally are teachers that have moved up the school ladder, so they have been in a classroom before. Their insight may help to provide just the right information that is needed.

Teachers

Other teachers are always a great resource, because other teachers have different ideas that I may not have thought about. I frequently ask my peers about different situations. The critical instance portion of this class seems like something we, as professional educators should discuss at our staff meetings. Other people's perspectives thoughts and ideas may be very helpful.

Conclusion

The capstone portfolio has been a very useful tool for my reflection on the courses that I have previously taken as well as my teaching in general. As a practicing teacher you get so caught up in the everyday situations that happen in the profession you hardly have time to reflect on them. My graduate work as well as this capstone portfolio has enabled me to produce some important unit plans, slide shows, and other documents that have been very successful in my teaching. I have also learned more about the inner aspect of education such as curriculum development and assessment as well as what it takes to make each and every student in the classroom successful. Although I classify myself as a constructivist, as a teacher you have to be open to many different learning theories in order to meet the diverse needs of all the student population. My research has allowed me to reflect on my teaching, and I hope that I am progressing so that my students can move forward in this technology era. Being an educational technology major, I enjoy seeing technology being used in all classroom situations. With the amount of technology we now have it can only increase student learning and provide tomorrow's students with the best tools possible to succeed.

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Artifact 1 Reflection

Artifact 1 is a guideline for a slide show that I use with my grade eight students for health education. The students will have four classes to complete the slide show. It is broken down into two different parts, research and development. This slide show will take the students four classes to construct. At the end of the slide show the students will present their finding to their classmates in a brief three to five minute presentation. The students are grade on the quality and accuracy of the information in the slide show as well as the presentation. The slide show and presentation allows students to gain information through the use of technology (the World Wide Web) gather information and develop a power point presentation. This type of work in health education allows the students to leave the classroom, and my lecture in order to work on their own to explore and investigate various topics. This project demonstrates that if I give a task to the students and allow them to work on their own to gather information and develop the slide show they will work to produce the end product. The main aspect of my teaching during this project is to monitor the students and help when necessary. This is the constructivist theory at work. This benefits the students because they are allowed to choose a topic that interests them, research the topic and put together a slide show presentation. I believe all skills involved including the use of technology will benefit these students now as well as later on in life. I could also use this general guideline to develop a project with my other classes on their level. The use of technology in any area of teaching is beneficial, because the students are familiar with technology and they are comfortable using it. By allowing them to work in this environment and explore and investigate they are bound to construct new information.

Grade 8 Project
Power Point Slide Show

- This project will account for 30% of your second marking period grade.
- Grade will be based on quality of the slide show, effort and presentation of accurate information.
- Minimum of 10 slides and a Max of 20. Graphics should be displayed with each slide.
- You will have 4 classes to complete this project, we will meet in the computer lab for each class.
- Slide show must have complete bibliography.

TOPIC (Ideas)

- Exercise
 - Sleep
 - Food Choices
 - Maintaining Weight
 - Eating Disorders
 - Personal Care
 - Mental Health
 - Emotional Health
 - Self-Esteem
 - Stress
 - Tobacco
 - Cardiovascular Disease
 - Environmental Health
 - Consumer Health
 - Safety and Risk Reduction
 - First Aid
 - Prevention and treatment of injuries
 - Nutrition
 - Drug Use/Abuse
- Class 1: Choose topic/ research topic.
Class 2: Research topic/ Start slide show
Class 3: Work on slide show
Class 4: Finish slide show
Class 5: Start to present slide shows in classroom.

Artifact 2 Reflection

Artifact 2 is a unit plan that I developed in which I incorporate technology in both physical education and health. I actually developed this unit for EDU-545, and was so excited when I developed it that I had to use this unit plan with my students. As I reflected in the plan evaluation for EDU-545 this was a very successful unit for me and I was glad that as a requirement I had to develop such a plan. This was very useful in my teaching and helps me grow and add the use of technology in both physical education and health. This unit was developed for my grade five health education classes. This unit has a few lessons in which students use hands on learning and technology to better understand nutrition, fitness, exercise and how their body works efficiently. In this five-lesson unit plan I have incorporated lesson plans, which allow students to explore web pages. In this exploration the students use a program called calorie counter, which adds and calculates the calories in the food products they enter. Also in this exploration the students are able to play nutrition based games, at certain approved web sites, and are even allow them to try to find useful websites on their own. Another lesson explores the use of technology (pedometers) to count steps and compare that to the calories they have used. These lessons as well as the entire unit have allowed my students to explore nutrition and exercise in a way that is mainly student- centered learning. In this plan I as well learned with the students, and this is what I believe is the constructivist theory in action. Once again this freedom allows the students to leave the classroom and explore new technologies and information that may not come with “standard” teaching.

Unit Plan
Technology Integration

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EDU-621

11/3/08

For this assignment I am going to incorporate a unit into a previously existing program that I instruct with my grade five-health education students. In my role as a health education teacher I do try to incorporate technology into my lessons. The unit will consist of at least one lesson that will completely involve the students and technology participation. The remainder of the lessons will be based around teacher oriented lessons in health education using technology. I meet with my grade five students once a week, so this unit plan will take five weeks. From previous years of teaching, the students have a general knowledge in the background of nutrition information. This unit will build upon what the students have learned previously and will go beyond that with new information and technologies not used in the past.

The first lesson in the unit will be an overview of some of the principals of nutrition. This is previously learned information. I will provide this through the use of a PowerPoint slide show. We will discuss the basic nutrition principals that were taught to the students in grade four health education. I will go through the slides provided and review the information with the students. During this time I will take questions about the different topics, and answer as many questions as I can. Topics that will be covered in this lesson will include: food labels, “The new Food Guide Pyramid”, the importance of exercise and diet, and the importance of food labels. Also included will be sample labels and what is in the products are far as ingredients are concerned. These are all topics that the students have learned as grade four students so I want to spend a little time reviewing and hopefully creating a greater understand of the information. This lesson will be

exclusively a teacher directed lesson with student participation. I will use my mobile laptop with LCD projector to display the PowerPoint slide show.

The second lesson in this unit will consist of the exploration of two web resources that I find very interesting and helpful for young students trying to learn about proper nutrition. I will use the mobile laptop with LCD projector along with the internet for this lesson. We will first explore the USDA website. The USDA webpage can be found at www.usda.gov. This site provides many different sub pages that the students and I can use to explore many different aspects of nutrition. At this site we will explore 1) The 2008 physical activity guidelines for Americans 2) The healthy meals resource system 3) The Health Finder 4) Dietary guidelines 5) The “New Food Guide Pyramid” and 6) Weight and Obesity. In this same lesson we will also explore a webpage called nutrition data. This site is a great resource for all ages. At this site you can enter the names of food or the categories of food, and the site will provide you with nutrition facts and a food label to go along with it. The web page can be found at www.nutritiondata.com. I have used this site in the past and the students really seem to enjoy this site because they can take a look at their favorite foods. This site can be very informative and effective when the students make the correlation between nutritional data and weight management. This site is also a great way to analyze meals which you can create with the help of the students. The analysis of the meals will provide a detailed nutrition label which will analyze the calories, calories from fat, cholesterol, vitamins and minerals, sodium etc. I find this to be a very effective teaching tool. For this lesson I will choose a meal that the school will provide the students for lunch. From looking at the lunch menu I will pick a lunch that I think might contain the most calories and fat. I have done this in the past and

many students were shocked to find out what they were consuming for lunch. More than just the calorie content and the fat, the analysis provided revealing data about the sodium content in the processed food they were eating. This lesson has been used in the past with other grades and will be used in the future. I even find myself going to this site on occasion to find nutrition data.

The third lesson in this unit will be a trip to the computer lab. For this lesson I will provide the students with a website called www.nourishinteractive.com. This site provides kids with facts about nutrition, as well as a did you know section, and crossword puzzles and games. With guidance from the instructor the students will explore this website. We will start by looking at the health information, and the did you know section. After this I will allow the students to enter the game room. This site provides the students with games that help the students make good nutrition choices and are interactive and bring fun to learning. The site also provides a few different games if you create a user ID and password. I will take the time before this lesson to create a user ID and password that the students can use for this lesson. If the students want to explore this site on their own they will have to create their own user ID and password. The students are able to play the games and learn about nutrition at the same time. The games do take a few minutes and the students do seem to enjoy them. Also during this lesson, the students will be asked to find a nutrition based website similar to this site. They will search the internet to try to find an interactive and information based website for students of their age. From this I hope to find new web resources that we can use in the future.

Lesson four of this unit will take place outside the classroom and the school. I am fortunate that we have a walking and hiking trail very close to the school, so we have

access to this at any time. For this lesson I will provide pedometers (step counters) to the students. In previous fitness lessons we have talked about calories and how calories are used by the body. This has also been incorporated with the pedometers and how the number of step taken correlates with the process of calorie usage. For this lesson I am going to see if the students can make the correlation between the number of steps they take and the calories they burn. I will provide the students with the pedometers and a chart that analyzes the activity (hiking) and the amount of steps in connection with the number of calories burned. We will be hiking a trail that is 1.1 miles. Start to finish this should take us no longer than 45 to 50 minutes. The trail does have some hill areas, so it will be a good workout for the students. The purpose of this lesson is to link exercise with nutrition. At another point in the school year I incorporate lessons in physical fitness with the students, which seem to be well received. Incorporating the fitness lesson in with nutrition is essential for the students to understand how their body uses the food energy that it takes in.

The last lesson in the unit will be a lesson on healthy snacks. In cooperation with the school wellness coordinator, and the kitchen manager: through funding form the State of Connecticut from an obesity grant, I will provide sample healthy snacks for each of my three grade five classes. I have spent some time researching the school wellness policy guidelines for healthy snacks. My objective is to choose about 8-10 snack options that the students can then sample. My goal is to try to make all the options, snacks that the students would not generally eat. I want the students to experience “new” healthy snacks. This lesson will not involve technology at all, but I do think that at some point it may be possible to incorporate technology to enhance the lesson.

At this point I am mid way through this unit and I have completed the first three lessons and now preparing for the hike on Wednesday 10/29 and the healthy snack lesson on 11/5. I do have to say that so far each lesson has gone extremely well. The first lesson which was meant as a review seemed to have about 70% of the students engaged. I do understand, because it was material they have previously learned, it may have been repetitive. I do think the PowerPoint with graphics helped to get a few more involved, but overall it went well. The second lesson which was an exploration of the two websites worked very well. I was so happy at the results of this lesson; the students were so engaged, and interested in the information presented. I will use this lesson in the future, and the good thing is that it can be used with almost any age. The students were so interested in the nutrition data that we could have gone another 30 minutes with the lesson. Even days later the students ask when we are going to do that lesson again. The students enjoyed creating meals, and just looking at the nutrition facts and any products they could think of. The third lesson was also a success. The nourishinteractive website provided entertainment and learning for the students as well as fun interactive games. Also a benefit from this lesson was that the students during their search for websites similar to this one, found many new interesting sites that we can explore in the future.

At this point I am planning and preparing for the last two lessons in the unit. The hike and the healthy snack sampling should be fun and interesting. I think I have come up with some snacks that will provide great interest for the students as long as they are willing to try them. Overall this unit seems to be going well. This is a unit that I designed for this assignment, and I have to say that it will definitely be a unit I will use in

the future. It seems to bring a great deal of strong points about nutrition and exercise along with the incorporation of technology.

References

www.nurishinteractive.com

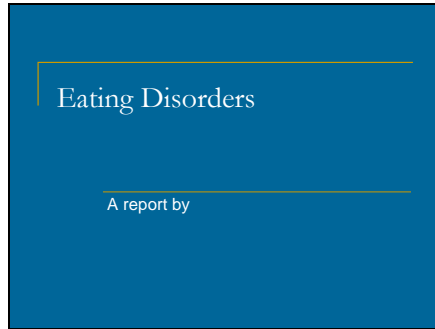
www.nutritiondata.com

www.usda.gov

Artifact 3 Reflection

Included with this paper is a PowerPoint presentation by one of my eighth grade students. I wanted to add this presentation as an example of student work, and show how the students develop the slide show. This student did a nice job with both the research and development of her slide show. She has yet to present her show, but will within the next few weeks. This slide show demonstrates that if students are given a task, with the proper information and guidance, they can develop a quality PowerPoint presentation. I believe this is a good example of a quality power point slide show. This slide show benefits not only the student who does the research and development, but all of his/her classmates as well. They presentation of the material allows the students to get information from the perspective of one of their classmates. To me this is very important. It is amazing to me to watch the students listen to there peers presentations. I almost seems that they are more engaged than when I present information. So acquiring new information from there peers is very important at any level.

Slide 1

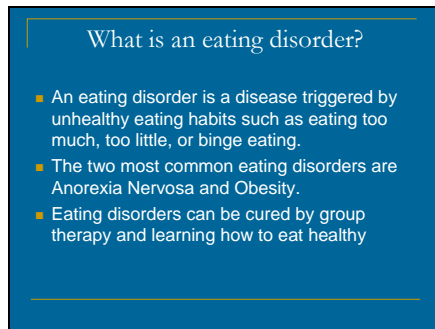


Eating Disorders

A report by

This slide features a dark blue background with a thin yellow border. The title 'Eating Disorders' is centered at the top in a white serif font. Below it, the text 'A report by' is centered in a smaller white font.

Slide 2



What is an eating disorder?

- An eating disorder is a disease triggered by unhealthy eating habits such as eating too much, too little, or binge eating.
- The two most common eating disorders are Anorexia Nervosa and Obesity.
- Eating disorders can be cured by group therapy and learning how to eat healthy

This slide has a dark blue background with a thin yellow border. The title 'What is an eating disorder?' is centered at the top in white. Below the title is a bulleted list of three items, each preceded by a yellow square bullet point. The text is in a white sans-serif font.

Slide 3



There are many different types of eating disorders

- Anorexia Nervosa
- Bulimia
- Obesity
- Binge Eating Disorder

This slide has a dark blue background with a thin yellow border. The title 'There are many different types of eating disorders' is centered at the top in white. Below the title is a bulleted list of four items, each preceded by a yellow square bullet point. The text is in a white sans-serif font.

Slide 4

Here are what some people with eating disorders look like:



The slide features two photographs. The left photograph shows two women with extremely thin bodies, one standing and one sitting, illustrating Anorexia. The right photograph shows a man and a woman eating a large meal, with the man appearing significantly overweight, illustrating Obesity.

Anorexia

Obesity

Slide 5

What causes a person develop an eating disorder?

- Eating disorders such as Anorexia and Bulimia that cause a person to lose weight might be triggered by
 - Obsessions over weight
 - Poor self-esteem
 - Bad relationships (with friends and family)
 - Physiological issues
 - The pressure to be thin by the media

Slide 6

Health risks associated with eating disorders:

Anorexia

- Low blood pressure
- Heart failure
- Osteoporosis
- Muscle loss
- Thinning of the hair
- Growth of hair on the body in effort to keep the body warm
- Tooth decay

Slide 10

Prevention and Seeking Treatment

- Eating disorders can be prevented by maintaining a healthy diet and a positive relationship with food
- People who have eating disorders should contact their doctors and start therapy immediately

Artifact # 4 Reflection

Artifact four is an assessment tool that I use for my physical education students. This was developed for me to evaluate my students for a specific unit in badminton. I use this assessment to grade my eighth grade students on their performance for the badminton unit. This assessment is not only used at the end of the unit but can be used during the unit to evaluate progress and performance. The purpose of this assessment tool is to evaluate the students based on the specific criteria of the tool. The tool does not just evaluate performance and athletic ability, but also the rules of the game and effort and conduct as well. It is my feeling that this tool is a good overall assessment tools, because it evaluates the students on various levels. This tool can also be used for other activities that take place throughout the physical education curriculum. I can modify the tool and use it with other sports, activities and games. The tool can also be modified to be used with different grade students, by changing some of the expectations so the results are based on the common core curriculum for the physical education department set fourth by the Pomfret Board of Education. I use this template for many of my assessments. I not only use this tool for evaluation I also evaluate each student each class, with a basic 1-4 scale. This scale is based upon class participation attitude and conduct. I see so many students each day I had to design a basic tool to assess each student each day. The tool benefits me, because I have a record of each student's performance and I can discuss that evaluation with the student. This assessment tool is also used to determine the final grade for each semester. The tool is beneficial to the students, because they get a copy of their assessment. Students are provided with the information that will be used to determine their grade for each semester.

Post Test Badminton Grade 8 Student A

Student demonstrates knowledge of sport.

1 2 3 4 5

Student demonstrates ability to score the sport.

1 2 3 4 5

Student is able to volley with another student.

1 2 3 4 5

Student is able to play a doubles match with another student.

1 2 3 4 5

Student participates with sportsmanship.

1 2 3 4 5

Student displays and effort that is constant and sincere.

1 2 3 4 5

Student wants and is willing to learn to improve.

1 2 3 4 5

1=F 60% or below

2=D 60-69%

3=C 70-79%

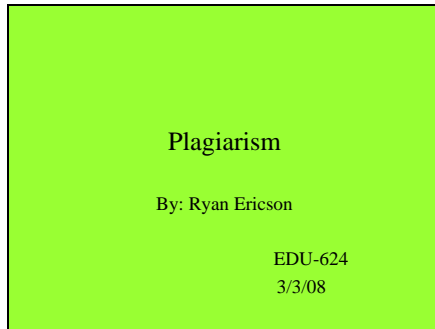
4=B 80-89%

5=A 90-100%

Artifact 5 Reflection

Artifact five is a power point slide show that I develop as an assignment for EDU-624. This assignment turned out to be very useful in my teachings. The students even in eighth grade are essentially unaware of what plagiarism actually is. I designed this slide show to be a basic guideline of what plagiarism is and how and why they need to reference their work. A basic rule of thumb is that if it's not your words, you need to give credit to the person who wrote those words. Along with this slide show they are given a web address that helps them produce a bibliography. The website is easybib.com. This is not an APA or MLA reference site but is a good source to use with middle school students. The basic point of the slide show is to explain to the students the basic points of referencing so that they can use them in high school and expand on them as they pursue higher education. The purpose of the slide show is actually two fold. It is designed to show basic principals of referencing but it is also a slide show, so as I am displaying the slide show to the students, they can see how a simple slide show is put together. The slide show that I designed has no sound, graphics etc. I was told by our computer teacher not to include this, because it distracts from the information. Also she explained that more than a few sentences or paragraphs per slide are too much information for middle school students. This artifact demonstrates a tool for referencing for middle school students as well as a guide for presenting a basic slide show. This slide show can be beneficial for many students. I have added it to our school webpage so that other teachers can use it as a guide on explaining the importance of referencing and the how and why's of putting together a paper or project and giving credit to work that is included other than the students.

Slide 1

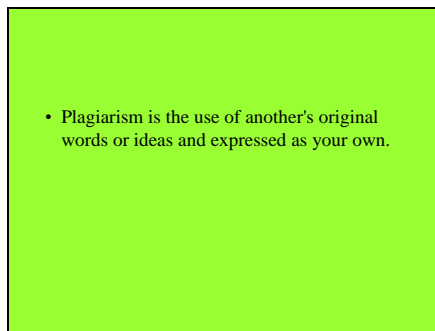
A light blue rectangular box with a black border containing the title, author, course number, and date.

Plagiarism

By: Ryan Ericson

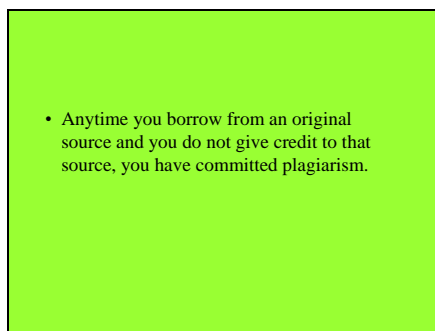
EDU-624
3/3/08

Slide 2

A light blue rectangular box with a black border containing a single bullet point.

- Plagiarism is the use of another's original words or ideas and expressed as your own.

Slide 3

A light blue rectangular box with a black border containing a single bullet point.

- Anytime you borrow from an original source and you do not give credit to that source, you have committed plagiarism.

Slide 4

- Many people think of plagiarism is copying someone else's work or borrowing someone else's original ideas.
- Term's such as "copying" and "borrowing" can be disguise the seriousness of the offense (plagiarism.org, 2008).

Slide 5

According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary to "plagiarize" means

- 1) To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own.
- 2) To use (another's production) without crediting the source
- 3) To commit literary theft.
- 4) To present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

Slide 6

- In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterwards (plagiarism.org, 2008).

Slide 7

Can words and ideas really be stolen?

- According to U.S. law the answer is yes.

Slide 8

- The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions.
- Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file) (plagiarism.org, 2008).

Slide 9

- Plagiarism can be against the law if a writer publishes a book or article (or music etc.) and you use it without permission, as if it were your own ideas or words, not only are you plagiarizing his work, you are also violating his copyright to that book or article (Schwartau, 2001).

Slide 10

How to avoid plagiarism

- To be on the safe side, always make it clear where the information comes from (kidshealth, 2005).

Slide 11

What is Citation?

- A “citation” is the way you tell your readers that certain material in your work came from another source. It also gives your readers the information necessary to find that source (plagiarism.org, 2008).

Slide 12

Why should I cite sources?

- Giving credit to the original author by citing sources is the only way to use other peoples work without plagiarizing (Plagiarism.org, 2008).

Slide 13

When do I need to cite?

- Whenever you use quotes.
- Whenever you paraphrase.
- Whenever you use an idea that someone else has already expressed.
- Whenever you make specific references to the work of another.
- Whenever someone else's work has been critical in developing your own ideas.

Slide 14

Why students plagiarize

- There are many reasons students plagiarize. Sometimes deadlines come around more quickly than expected, sometimes assignments feel overwhelming, and sometimes the boundaries of plagiarism and research just get confused.

Slide 15

What happens if I plagiarize

- Most schools are pretty strict about plagiarism. If you are caught, you can end up with suspension or expulsion. At the very least you will most likely fail the assignment.

Slide 16

- In order to avoid plagiarism altogether you will want to give the original author credit for his/her work, and try to involve your thoughts on the topic. Always cite information in a reference section of your paper (usually at the end).

Slide 17

References

- Dowshen, S M.D. (2005) What is plagiarism. (kidshealth) www.kidshealth.org
- Plagiarism.org (learning center) educational tips on plagiarism prevention. www.plagiarism.org
- Schwartau W, (2001) Internet & computer ethics for kids (and parents and teachers who haven't got a clue). Chapter 21 (plagiarism).

Artifact 6 Reflection

Artifact six is a slide show presentation that I developed as part of a project for EDU-553. This slide show compares a physical education program in the United States and India. I developed this slide show as part of a group project for EDU-553. The end result of the project was a culture quest of India. This slide show can be viewed on my webpage at <http://www.geocities.com/ericsonpcs2/> this artifact was not used with my students but it gave me a better understanding of what physical education in another country is like. I understand that school and organized activities are very different in other countries, but the extreme of having 100 plus students for one teacher helps to put things into perspective. The India culture quest was provided by the instructor, I was my responsibility to find the appropriate information. The artifact demonstrates that in different cultures the emphasis on a structured physical education class is not the most important thing. I'm not saying the physical education in India is not important, but the structure of a class, number of students, and time allotment are not emphasized. If I were to ever use this with my students I could show this and explain how things are very different in another culture. Sadly a large number of young people have no idea what happens outside this country. This slide show could at least provide them with information as to what a physical education program in a school in India looks like compared to what they experience. I know in preparing the information for this slide show and unit plan for this project I learned a tremendous amount of information that I can refer back to when I need it. The more information that I gather about culture allows me to better understand my students from different cultures.

Slide 1

Exercise and Physical
Education in India

By
Ryan Ericson

Slide 2

Exercise in Ancient India

- Since ancient times, people in India believed that the human body is indeed an instrument of dharma.
- Hence the body is to be properly nourished, and maintained.

Slide 3

- In medieval Karnataka people gave as much importance to physical exercise as to literary education.
- The principal of "sound mind in a sound body" was not only accepted but also faithfully practiced.

Slide 4

- Village schools were usually situated in the temple premises or in the courtyard of mathas, where children played after daytime lesson.
- Sporting events that took place were: Wrestling, boxing, mallakhambha (pillar acrobatics), the shooting of arrows, and demonstrations of strength such as weightlifting and yoga.

Slide 5

Exercise in India today

- In modern times playing is the fundamental right of a child, either in school or outside.
- Children play after school, making their own teams with the locally available friends, choose a game of their liking, devise rules and play the game to their hearts content.

Slide 6

- The main idea behind such games is that the children enjoy playing, they make friends, they play as teams and, such play is to provide them with lot of challenging opportunities to provide their talents and fun.

Slide 7

Physical Education in Schools

- In most schools in India, the physical education teachers are manning the classes from grade 6 and above. Such a teacher is to manage a minimum of 100 children at a time within limited space of the playground surrounded by houses, bushes and waste dumps.

Slide 8

India vs. U.S. PE

- We think that we have it tough in schools in the United States. It doesn't compare to what physical education teachers have to compete with in India.

Slide 9

- A single teacher with 100 students can not possibly provide a quality physical education program.
- Many children slowly get dejected without getting even a single chance to play and walk out of the field to the shady place to spend their time idly. This is a common sight in almost all Indian schools.

Slide 10

Why is this the case?

- No one is accountable in the side of physical education. No testing, no evaluation and no follow-up. Many physical education teachers are unsuccessful in their attempts to do something novel. No one is interested in this field.

Slide 11

References

- www.hindu.com The Hindu: Online edition of India's national newspaper, Tuesday, Feb 19, 2002.
- www.kamat.com Kamat Research Database: Education in Karnataka through the ages. Kamat's Potpourri 1996-2007.

