

Curriculum Web Reflection

Because I do not have the opportunity to test the curriculum web Jen Thompson and I created with our target audience, first graders, I am not able to observe how the students use it. However, I can speculate the usefulness of the curriculum web in a first grade classroom.

I feel that our curriculum web has several strengths because it will be valuable and meaningful to the first grade students because it is designed according to constructivist teaching strategies, which are centered on the students' interests and needs. The first learning experience involves four different centers that introduce students to shapes. At each center, there is a "What Counts" sheet that lists the expectations of each student, which will be used to assess the students during the time spent at the centers. The students are essentially in control of their own learning because they learn at their own pace and are given several different activities depending on what suits their learning styles. Students will be given the opportunity to explore shapes using manipulatives, the Internet, books and magazines, and Geoboards.

Once the students become familiar with shapes, the purpose of the second learning experience is for the students to verbalize their findings using mathematical language. Jen found that the Alien game has been successful and fun for the students in describing what shapes are. The teacher pretends that he or she does not know what a particular shape is and the students are supposed to describe to the teacher how to draw it using mathematical language from the A-Z list. A note that Jen and I could have included was an activity that describes how to create and A-Z list instead of assuming a teacher knows what it is.

The third learning experience introduces three-dimensional shapes. I feel that the students will have a better understanding of three-dimensional shapes if they can associate it with a concrete example. For this reason and for the reason that Jen and I wanted to include parents in their child's learning, we decided to extend the activity to locate three three-dimensional objects at home and bring them in to school the next day to share with the rest of the class.

The fourth learning experience applies what students know about shapes by identifying them in real life. The teacher and students will walk outside or around the school building take pictures of objects decided by the students. Then the students are to write three sentences describing what they found using mathematical language they already learned. I feel that this is a valuable lesson because it relates what students are learning in the classroom to their own lives. The goal is for students to be able to recognize and identify how shapes are used to create objects we see in real life.

I feel that our website design was very creative and appropriate for our intended audience, first grader students. Our curriculum web is different from the examples we have seen because it is directed more towards the teachers on how to implement the curriculum web because the needs and capabilities of our target audience. It is easy to navigate and simple for the students to know what to do when on the student's page by the icons next to each brief description. If Jen and I had more time, we wanted to create a quiz using a form on the student's page to obtain more feedback from the students. This may be something that we add in future when we have more time.