

Exemplary Instruction Commentary: Visual Arts

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1. Lessons shown in video

Lessons 1 and 3 from the Tiki project are shown in the three submitted video clips. Clip 1 shows lesson one introduction with Tiki observations. In this clip, students begin by making some observations about Tiki lanterns from previous classes. Specifically students look at what is good and what could be improved according to the standards addressed in this project: shape, form, line, and symmetry. Clip 2 and Clip 3 are from Lessons 3. Clip 2 shows the mid-project critique. In this video students can be seen critiquing each other. I participate in the critique by demonstrating and showing how to critique positively. Another big role I play is being the translator for Ezequiel. Ezequiel arrived in my classroom half way through February after the semester had started. He had just moved with from Mexico and transferred into the public school system speaking no English. A part of my teaching belief is that every student should be incorporated into the classroom. I wanted Ezequiel to participate with his classmates, so I used my basic Spanish skills to translate from English to Spanish and Spanish to English. Finally in clip 3, you can see a work day where students are continuing their construction of the Tiki forms. In this you can see students asking questions using vocabulary, hypothesizing solutions to problems, and applying my suggestions to their work.

2. Promoting a positive environment

Evidence of a positive learning environment

What is being shown	When it's being shown	How it's being shown
Calm, quiet, controlled, and productive	(Video 1) 1:00 – 2:20	Students talking with their peers about the project they are beginning. They feel comfortable enough to converse with each other.
Students responding to the teacher	(Video 1) 4:25	When I ask George to say what he observed a little bit louder he yells it in a playful way. Rather than being upset the whole class laughs at his response. This reinforces that the class is meant to be one that is relaxed and fun.
Reminding students of the kind of environment we want	(Video 2) 0:32 – 1:26	I introduce the critique as a way to be constructive so students can benefit from their peers opinions rather than feel judged.
Creating positive opinions and encouraging Gives an example of positive critique	(Video 2) 0:42 – 0:52	Tommy comments “What if there’s nothing good to say? Like mine has barely even been started.” I combat this negative energy by saying “Tell that person they are working hard” This helps people who are farther behind feel encouraged
Encouraging a safe environment for learning	(Video 2) 4:47	I remind students that this is meant to be a safe environment where it is ok to make mistakes. During critique it is important to be honest but not attack each other.
Students comfortable enough to accept critique from peers	(Video 2)	Throughout this film you can hear students critiquing each other and suggesting ways to improve each other’s pieces
Inclusion of students with needs	(Video 2) 5:30 – 13:23	I want Jedidiah to participate so I become the translator so he can interact with his peers.

Being patient and understanding	(Video 3) 0:08 – 0:39	Laurie asks for help with wedging a piece of clay. This was something that we had learned the first week of class and she still had not mastered it. Instead of being upset I explained it again and watched her perform the task.
Encouraging thinking and being patient	(Video 3) 0:55 – 1:25	Paul has been pounding his clay loudly and asks for help on shaping. After he incorrectly guesses solutions, I help to guide him in a different direction.
Attending and being aware of student needs	(Video 3)	Alethea needs to be wearing rubber gloves on her hands to prevent a serious form of eczema from spreading. I suggested to her that she wear these to prevent her hands from becoming injured.

Promoting respect and rapport

Since I am only 6 to 9 years older than many of my students, I think that I have a special niche when it comes to having students' respect and share rapport with me. One of the biggest things I emphasize in my classroom is respect. I show respect to my students and in turn they show respect to me. I make a point of being interested in what students are doing and attend extracurricular events where I know my students will be participating. My students enjoy talking to me about world events, personal things they are going through, and even some creative ideas for the class. The video's I submitted only provide a small peek into the kind of mutual respect I have with my students. However, some areas that do show my responsiveness to students can be seen in videos 2 and 3. In video 2, the class is critiquing each other on their project so far. I know that many of my students would want to make this a joke so I remind them that this is a class that is safe and where they won't be judged in (0:32 – 1:26 & 4:47). I want students to know that this is a classroom that can be fun but needs to be respectful towards both peers and teacher. Another point in video 2, I can be seen helping students who have specific needs. At the 42 second Mathias, one of my students that is behind and frequently gone because of health problems tries to turn the critique into something that is negative for him by saying "what if there is nothing good to say?" I jump on this as a chance to remind students that even if they are behind on the project, they can still find something positive in their work. Another area that I can be seen helping students is when I assist Jedidiah in translating for the critique. Despite the language barrier I think that it is important to have students always participating with their peers. This provides them with unique insight and can help them resolve some issues they are experiencing with projects. In video 3, I picked a video clip that shows students during a work day. This clip shows that my students are not afraid to ask for help and also not afraid to hypothesize solutions. At one point, I try to help Paul with constructing a part of his Tiki. I do this by asking him to think about solutions and then steering him to find a solution that is more efficient. I always offer my solutions after students have suggested ways they would fix their projects and present it as an option not as the only answer.]

3. Engaging students in learning

Throughout my instruction, students and I are frequently conversing about their project and how they think it is looking according to the learning target. Listed below are some areas where students are directly being asked to answer questions pertaining to learning targets.

What is Being Shown	When it's Being Shown	How it's Being Shown
Student response to Tiki observation	(Video 1) 4:40	Nayeli explains the difference in size from the top of the piece and bottom (circumference). This is an example of students using academic language to explain form (GLE 1.1.2).
Explaining a new vocab word	(Video 1) 5:41	Students explain the definition of coiling.
Focus on the target goals	(Video 2) 1:49	I direct students to be looking at shape, form, and line.
Student hypothesizing production	(Video 2) 4:22	Table 6 can be seen hypothesizing about ways to improve a problem with symmetry
List what they are being graded on and apply it to their	(Video 2) 6:00	Students verbally state what they are being graded on and apply it to the Tiki construction.

work		
Student explaining production	(Video 3) 1:04	I ask Paul to hypothesize ways to fix the problem he is having with construction.
Student hypothesizing solutions to production issues	(Video 3) 2:07	(Video 3) 2:07 I ask Alethea to hypothesize and think about ways to improve her project.

Engaging students with knowledge, skills, concepts

My instruction is designed to have students frequently demonstrating their knowledge of the assignment. This can be seen through classroom discussions or observations, and physically creating the project. For example, while constructing their projects, students will talk to one another and with me about ways to resolve issues with their pieces. This helps them practice applying and sharing their knowledge about production and form with each other. Another way I engage students is through the written tasks. When I gave student's the mid-project critique and the pop-quiz, I was asking them to apply their knowledge and interpret specific aspects of the assignment. For example, during the mid-project critique students were asked to list areas that they were being graded on. They then were meant to look at their Tiki and their peers and assess if these goals were successfully met.

Link to prior knowledge and assets

My instruction is developed by scaffolding information previously learned in class. To begin with, students learn the basics of clay working and as we progress onto other assignments I build upon that knowledge already learned. I chose this assignment to be one that dealt with the Polynesian culture. Several of my students are from Hawaii, so this provided them with a chance to express their cultural tradition. They also were able to talk to their peers about how to successfully create a Tiki figure.

4. Deepen student learning

Deepening Learning

What is Being Shown	When it's Being Shown	How it's Being Shown
Applying goals to the successful or unsuccessful projects	(Video 1)	Throughout this video clip, students are asked to observe line, symmetry, shape, and form. They then determine if this was done successfully or not on the example piece
Student apply vocabulary to what they see	(Video 2) 4:03	George is critiquing Joelle's project using terms like symmetry, shape and form.
Analyzing success of goals	(Video 2)	Students apply the grading criteria to successful areas in the project.
Explaining how to prevent problems with production	(Video 2) 9:28	Students explain how to solve the issue of the Tiki circumference getting too wide.

As mentioned previously, my instruction strategy is to ask questions of students and have them articulate their knowledge and understanding of specific aspects of the project in response. Video clip 1, is a period of observation where I have students look things like symmetry, shape, form, and line on Tiki lanterns from previous semesters.]

Personal Perspective to support understanding

In the art classroom, students are frequently given the opportunity to apply their own understanding to a project. This is one of the benefits of being in an art classroom. Students can interpret the assignment and then add personal aspects to the piece. For example, one of my students wanted to change the Tiki project so he could create a creature from one of the books he was reading. He explained to me that he felt like a Tiki would not have much use in his home and he would prefer to create this creature that did not have a face. Since the face was a part of the assignment, I asked him to think of a way that we could apply these goals to his project. He came to me and suggested that he make parts of the creature be the required parts of the Tiki. For example, he wanted to create tentacles coming from the base and the top to be

considered a forehead and chin design. Another aspect of the Tiki is having eyes, a nose, and a mouth. He suggested that we count holes in the “stump” to be eyes, wings to be equivalent to the nose, and detailed texture to fulfill the mouth requirement. By this student changing a part of the requirement to fit his personal aesthetic, he demonstrated that he really understood the goal of the project. Because of the different ways that students interpreted the assignment, all of the projects looked unique. Each product showed a part of its creator. For example, one student created a princess Tiki with long eyelashes and big lips. Another student really liked henna design and incorporated this into the forehead design. Finally, another student created what she called a “hipster cat”. It had feline attributes but then was decorated with a bow tie, glasses, and moustache.

5. Analysis of teaching

For the whole class, I think that I could improve my instruction in two different ways. One is being clearer about where students can find the list of goals for the day, and the other is the location of where I am during the point of instruction. In video clip 1, I verbally explain what the students should be looking at in their observations but did not point out that they were also written on the whiteboard on the back until 3 minutes into the instruction. Many students many not have been listening or were not able to focus. By not pointing this out immediately, roughly three minutes of classroom observation was wasted for specific individuals. At the three minute mark, one of my students with an IEP asked what they were supposed to be doing. I think that it would have been best to have the task written and handed out to each table group both in English and Spanish. This would provide those who have poor eyesight, short attention spans, or are English language learners so that the option of both hearing the verbal explanation and seeing a written copy in front of them. Another area that I noticed could be improved was the location of my instruction. When I was directing class conversation in video 1, often my back is turned to a part of the classroom. If I were to stand directly in the front of the class or by the computer I would be able to see all of my students. In addition, by moving the point of instruction to the front of the classroom, it would subtly remind students that I am a teacher.

Changes for improvement

These changes would improve instruction in a variety of ways for students of all achievement levels. By providing a variety of media in my presentations, I will be able to reach a wider group of students. In an article called Multimodal Learning through Media: What the Research Says, it touches on the importance of providing several instructional models for students. According to their research when students both hear and see the information being presented they will only retain about 50% of it. If I continue to just ask students to follow along, they will not retain much of the information. However, if I were to ask students to synthesize it and make a summary for themselves I could increase student learning. According to another article, Ten Effective Research-Based Instructional Strategies written by Robert J. Marzano, by having students synthesize the information student achievement will increase by 34 percentile points. By changing the way that I present my information, students will be able to better understand and comprehend new knowledge.