

The class I taught is in a sequence of topics for the course, Intro to Exceptionalities. This is an undergraduate class taught by Andrea Adderly-Simms. Prior to teaching this class, I met with Andrea several times to determine some guiding questions that I could use for the basis of a lesson on Gifted Education. We discussed the topic, the students and the setting. There are 150 students on the roster for this class. They meet from 12:30 – 1:45pm and the setting is auditorium style seating. Most of the students in this course are working on a degree in education and have limited 'educational background' so I framed my presentation with that in mind. The students will have some prior knowledge of 'gifted' because they read the corresponding text chapter and had a prior lecture covering the basics of this topic so this lesson will focus on the experiential aspect of gifted instruction.

At the end of this lesson I hope students will:

- understand 5 myths of giftedness
- Understand the definition of gifted
- understand criteria for gifted identification
- Learn about 3 models for gifted programming
- Learning about 5 effective instructional techniques to use with gifted students

My overall strategy for teaching this large group was to break up the 'lecture' format with a quick quiz, a 'think, pair, share', a YouTube video called "I Am Gifted", a brief video clip of "Little Man Tate", and a video of my gifted students involved in various activities in my classroom.

I had the student's attention as they came into the classroom because I had music playing (novelty). The power point was up on the screen with the objective of the lesson. I established foundational knowledge by asking several pre-assessment questions then related this to their current educational experience to begin building a rapport with the students. I engaged them with a story of my journey that led me into the world of giftedness. This addressed the 'human element' because every student could make a connection to something in my story. I further assessed student's prior knowledge by asking them five common myths of giftedness. My original plan was to use clickers to elicit feedback however the clickers were not working. I improvised by asking the students to hold up notecards to show me if they thought the answer was True or False.

(I need to explain the notecards! Late Wednesday afternoon, I met with Andrea to make sure the clickers were working. They were not so I told Andrea I was going to just have students raise their hand. She told me Dr. Sloane has been doing some research and found that students are more likely to respond if they have something in their hand, rather than just raising their hand – so I had the students hold up notecards with either a T (true) or F (false) to show their answers. There was 100% response for each question!)

After discussing the 'myths' of giftedness, I reviewed several definitions of giftedness and focused on the key words, e.g. domain, asynchronous. I showed the YouTube video of "I Am Gifted" then I described a scenario of a highly gifted child who was exhibiting asynchronous behaviors. I asked the students to think for a minute about how they would deal with this situation in their classroom then turn to a classmate and share solutions. After several minutes of "think, pair, share", I asked several groups to share their solutions. They all had great ideas so we summarized a collective solution that they thought would benefit the child.

Next, I explained how students are identified for gifted programs and described the differences that exist between 3 local gifted programs. I showed a brief movie clip of "Little Man Tate" so I could use that as an illustration of another type of 'program' and point out various types of instructional modifications. Then I described 5 different instructional strategies that enhance gifted instruction and asked students to 'look' for examples of these in the video of my gifted classroom. While we watched the video I pointed out instructional examples and classroom modifications that enhance gifted instruction.

We wrapped up the lesson with a question and answer period. Ten minutes before the end of class, I asked them to use their T/F notecard to write at least 2 new things they learned from the lesson. I collected the notecards as they left. There were 117 students in class when I taught. 62 notecards were returned.

- After class I sorted the comments by 'the 5 things I hoped students would learn' from the lesson (understand: myths of giftedness, definition of giftedness, criteria for identification, models for programming, and instructional techniques). Of the 'new things they learned', most of the comments were about instructional techniques. 53/62 students (85%) made comments that implied that they didn't realize you could 'modify' the curriculum, or teach at a higher level to better meet the needs of the students, 47/62 students or (76%) commented on the different models for gifted programming, 32/62 (61%) didn't know the criteria for gifted identification, 16/62 (26%) commented on myths of giftedness, and 4/62 (6%) commented on the different definitions of giftedness.
- Most of the students wrote 2 new things they learned, 6 students wrote more than 2 things and 18 wrote only one comment.

Overall I think the lesson went well. I incorporated number of Fink's suggestions for creating significant learning experiences. I also applied some of the andragogical strategies that I learned from my case quest research. For example, using real life experiences is one strategy for engaging adult learners. Most of my lesson incorporated real life experiences that related to teaching gifted students in the classroom. I think this is an effective way to make that 'human connection'. In spite of the 'lecture-style' environment, I was able to incorporate some small group work with students by having them work in pairs to think, discuss and share solutions for a real life scenario. I also provided reflective time by asking students to record two new things they learned from the lesson. Additionally, I also used 'novelty' by using music to start class and

I broke up the lecture with a variety of videos. This kept the students engaged and focused. Andrea even commented after the lesson – she said, “My goodness, did you see their faces - their expressions.... You had them right where you wanted them! They were so into what you said!”

If I taught this lesson again, I would narrow the focus and go more in depth on fewer topics. This would allow more time to build foundational knowledge so students would have a better framework for understanding gifted education. I also wish I would have allowed more time for discussion at the end of the lesson. I didn't anticipate as much participation from a large undergraduate population so it was pleasantly surprising that there was so much interest and so many questions!

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