

Contextual Teaching and Learning Case Study

Middle School Preservice Teachers Investigate What Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions are Necessary To Prepare Students For the Work Force: A Case Study

Rationale for the Project

The purpose of this collaborative project is to provide you with an opportunity to find out what knowledge, skills, and dispositions local businesses deem important and necessary for their workforce. You will be required to tour a local business and complete a case study. After completing the tour, we expect that you would begin to ask questions about who is employed by local businesses and the kinds of skills, knowledge and dispositions that are necessary for them to be successful workers. Moreover, we encourage you to think about what this means for you as you prepare yourselves to prepare others to enter the workforce. We also expect you to focus your attention on what impact the products and services delivered by the workers might have on the lives of all citizens. We believe that this experience will motivate you to contemplate the purposes of schooling, how to assess learning, and how you might deliver instruction to meet the needs of a diverse workforce.

Organizational Structure for the Project

Answers to the following questions should be organized and arranged in a logical and coherent fashion. This assignment must be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, and APA style. It will count for one grade in each professor's class

1. Two site visits will be scheduled to Oliver Rubber Company (OCR) due to the large number of students (n=60) in four classes. We have tentatively planned the site visits to OCR during the week of October 2-6, 2000.
2. The following questions will guide your observations while visiting the local company:
 - How do you view the education offered to middle school students in public schools?
 - What connections (if any) do you see between what and how students are taught, what they learn, and how they might be required to perform at Oliver Rubber Company?
 - What type of evidence is provided to support your claim?
 - If you do not believe that the public schools are preparing students to work in this type of business environment, what do you believe is necessary, and/or missing from the curriculum? What needs to stay the same?
 - As a beginning teacher, what knowledge do you need in order to successfully educate middle school students to enter into this work force?
 - After completing the tour and thinking about your experience, please answer the following question. The students enrolled in public schools are receiving some

type of knowledge. What is that knowledge, and of what use is it to the students and their future?

- In your opinion, what must change within the curriculum in order to change the way in which students' use the knowledge offered in schools so that businesses will find them employable?
 - What skills are necessary for students to successfully enter into the workforce at Oliver Rubber Company?
3. Please describe in detail how content (mathematics, language education, social science and science) knowledge was used at Oliver Rubber Company.
 4. Please describe examples of collaboration and/or independence that were observed in the workplace. Please provide observed examples. What skills did the workers reveal they needed in order to work collaboratively and/or independently in this environment?
 5. Tell us what you believe about Oliver Rubber Company's employees understanding of theories that underlie their day-to-day activities in order to be productive workers? What must change in how we educate our students to ensure that the transfer of knowledge from the classroom to the workforce occurs? Additionally, what must we do as teacher educators to ensure that this occurs? What needs to stay the same?
 6. What is the ethnic makeup of the workers? What is the gender make-up of the workers? What roles do you observe women and men playing at Oliver Rubber Company? Describe the work relationships. What was the nature of their interactions?
 7. Each student should provide a description of the company.
 8. Students should respond to the following question: Name one thing that was not identified in this assignment that you would like to include...What one thing did you observe that was not included and what impact did it make?

<u>CTL Assignment Requirement</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	
Organization of Case Study	Student awarded 3 points for developing central ideas of the assignment and providing an above average number of examples, illustrations, facts and/or details.	
Style	Student awarded 4 points for using language that is precise, vivid and varied. The student's tone was sustained throughout the paper. When writing, the student was fully aware of the audience.	
Conventions: Usage and Mechanics	Student earned 3 points for consistently demonstrating correct usage and mechanics. There were no errors and the meaning of the text was clear.	
Description of Company	The student earned 10 points for clearly describing the company. Included in this description was the type of product produced, number of employees, a description of the plant and any other information that added to the context of the case study.	
Collaboration	The student earned 10 points for clearly describing types of collaborations and independence observed at Oliver Rubber Company. Included in this description were examples, illustrations and details. The student also described the type of skills they deem necessary for workers to work collaboratively or independently.	
Connection to Content	The student earned 15 points for describing the content used by workers at Oliver Rubber Company. The student provided examples and details to illustrate this point. The student inferred whether or not the factory workers understood the theory involved in their work. Examples of inferences were included. The student described ways in which middle school teachers can change curriculums and instructions so that students will clearly understand how	

	theories are applied in real world contexts.	
Description of Workers	The student earned 5 points for a complete description of the workers. Included in this section of the case study, students described the following: ethnic/racial makeup of workers, gender of workers and the various roles performed by workers. The student provided examples when appropriate and the language was precise, vivid and varied.	
Missing Component	The student earned 3.5 points for identifying one construct that was not included in the CTL assignment.	
Impact	The student earned 3.5 points for describing and/or discussing the impact of the observation and/or conversations at Oliver Rubber Company.	